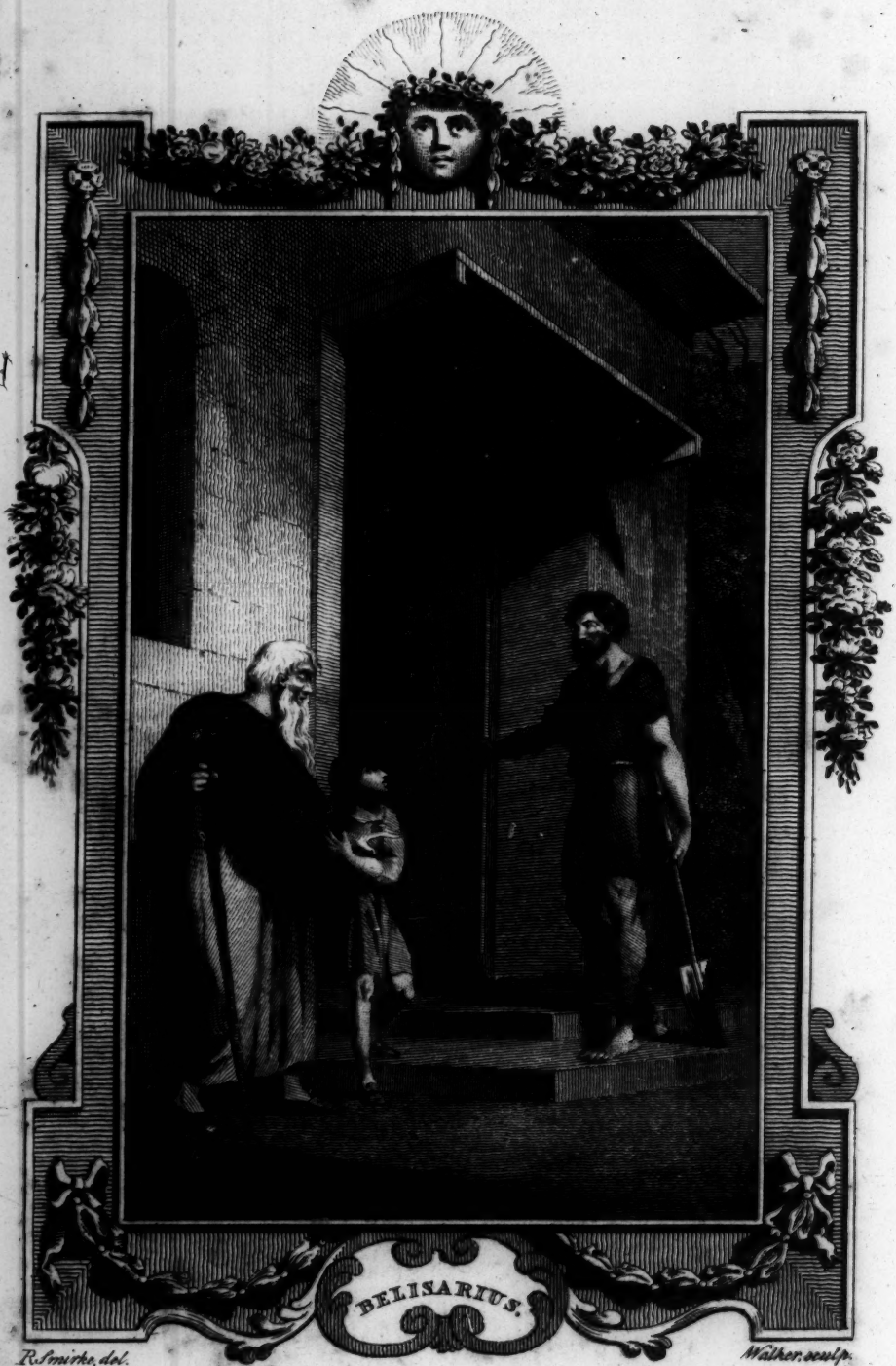
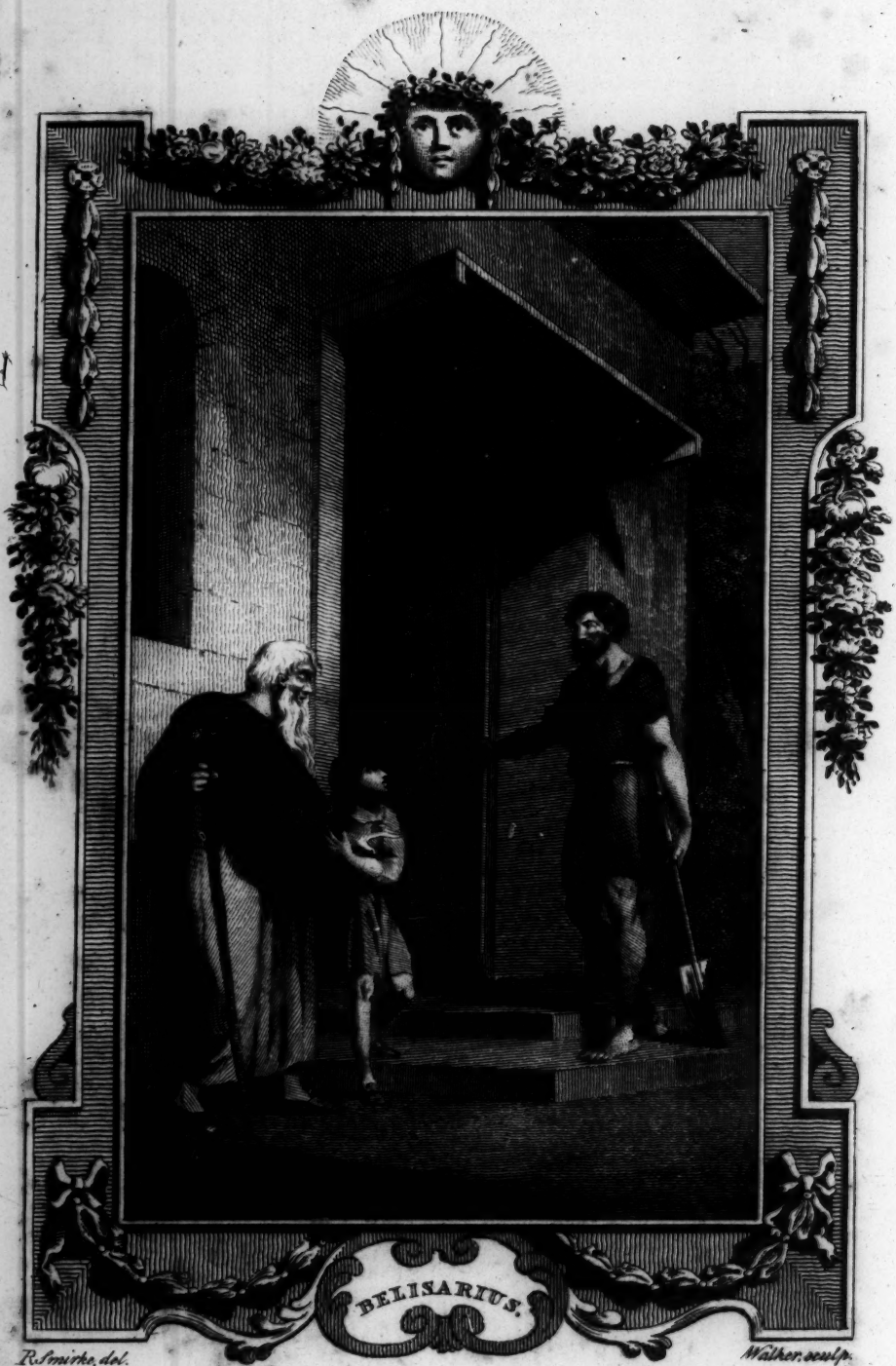


Plate I.

Publishd as the Act directs, by Harrison & Co. Feb. 1. 1789.



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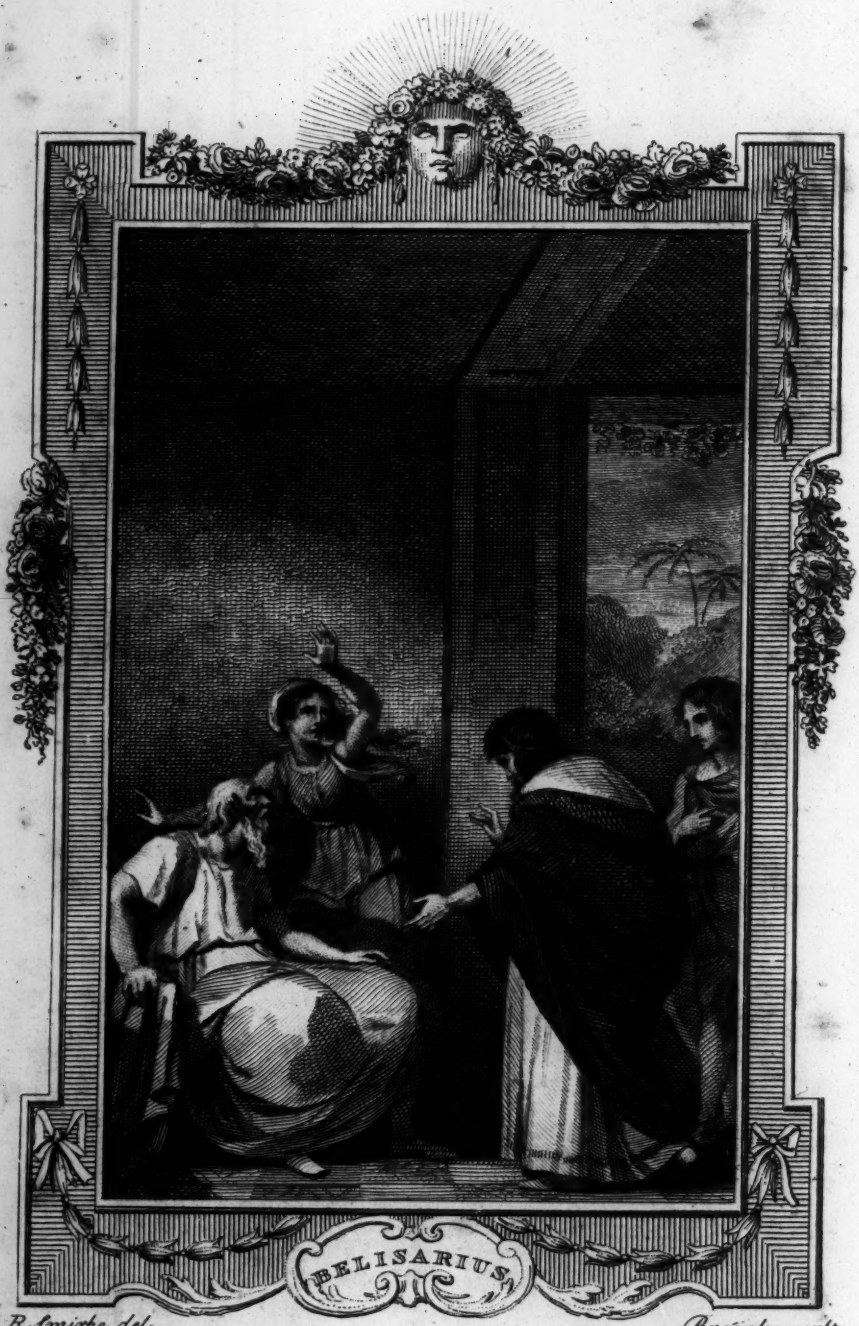

R. Smirke. del. Bromley. sculp.

Plate II. Publish'd as the Act directs, by Harrison & Co. Apl. 1. 1789.

BELISARIUS.

TRANSLATED FROM THE FRENCH OF

M. MARMONTEL,

k 1207. e. 16 / 2.

MEMBER OF THE FRENCH ACADEMY.

BY

FRANCIS ASHMORE, ESQ.

NON MIROR, SI QUANDO IMPETUM CAPIT (DEUS) SPECTANDI MAGNOS VIROS COLLUCTANTES CUM ALIQUA CALAMITATE. SENECA DE PROVID.

LONDON:
Printed for HARRISON and Co. N° 18, Paternoster-Row.
M.DCC LXXXIX.

ADVERTISEMENT.

THIS production, which may be properly denominated an HISTORICAL NOVEL, is calculated to pleaſe even the moſt faſtidious reader. The ſtory, as MARMONTEL acknowledges, is founded on the popular notion of BELISARIUS, in which the truth of Hiſtory is but little regarded. The work, however, certainly preſents a very faithful picture of the age in which Beliſarius lived: and the eye of diſcernment traces thoſe manners and principles which not only ſerved to precipitate the fall of one great empire, but which will infallibly deſtroy any other ſtate, however potent and flouriſhing, where they univerſally prevail.

The painting was finiſhed by the hand of a maſter: but MARMONTEL, with a mind that deſerved to be free, was born, and lived, where liberty is denied even to ſentiment. The *fears* of Deſpotiſm, at leaſt, are vigilant: the reſemblance to the ſtate of his own country was too ſtriking; and the French adminiſtration, enervated by luxury and refinement, felt Truth to be a libel. In a ſtate ſo arbitrary, remonſtrance could be of no avail: the book was ſuppreſſed at Paris; and the Author, himſelf another Beliſarius, was puniſhed with a temporary confinement in the Baſtille, by the very people he was ſtruggling to ſerve.

The Tranſlator will not preſume to aſſert, that he has preſerved all the ſpirit of the exquiſite original: to do that, would require, perhaps, a genius at leaſt equal to that of the celebrated Author. It will not, however, be very preſumptuous to inſiſt, that BELISARIUS has ſuffered leſs injury under his hands, than in thoſe of any other Engliſh Tranſlator: this is all that he promiſed to himſelf, and it is all that the Reader muſt expect.

F. ASHMORE.

THE

AUTHOR's PREFACE.

I Know, and will by no means attempt to conceal, that the chief incident in the ſtory on which this little production has been founded, is a mere vulgar error, and not an hiſtorical fact. That error, however, has ſo long prevailed, and the idea of BELISARIUS as a blind old man reduced to beggary, is become ſo extremely familiar, that it is almoſt impoſſible to contemplate the character of that venerable hero, without ſeeing him in thoſe circumſtances of complicated wretchedneſs, under which I have on the preſent occaſion judged it expedient to repreſent him.

With this exception, I have faithfully adhered to the truth of hiſtory, taking Procopius for my guide. That ſcandalous libel, however, known by the title of ANECDOTES, or SECRET HISTORY, and which has been attributed to my favourite author, I have totally diſregarded; ſince there appears to me ſufficient evidence, that this indigeſted maſs of falſhood, detraction, and abſurdity, far from being the work of ſo reſpectable an hiſtorian, was in reality produced by ſome miſerable declaimer, equally ignorant and wicked*.

Among all the hiſtorians contemporary with Procopius, as well as thoſe who ſucceeded him for at leaſt five hundred years, there is not one who has mentioned theſe ANECDOTES. Agathias, who lived at the ſame time, enumerates the compoſitions of Procopius, but ſays not a ſingle ſyllable about the work in queſtion. It may be urged, that it was preſerved clandeſtinely; but, in the courſe of three hundred years from the original date, it might ſurely have been diſcovered and publiſhed. The learned Photius would certainly have known it, and yet he never heard of it. Suidas, a writer of the eleventh century, is the firſt who imputes this deſpicable ſatire to Procopius: and the majority of the learned have, without examination, repeated what Suidas thought proper to advance†. Writers, however, are ſtill extant, by whom the authority of Suidas has been ſuſpected‡; and there are likewiſe thoſe who, not ſatisfied with barely doubting the fact, have ventured poſitively to deny that the SECRET HISTORY was the production of Procopius. In this laſt number is Eichelius, in the Preface and Notes to the Edition which he has publiſhed. He

* An advocate of Cæſarea is ſuppoſed to have been the true author. Vide Mem. de l'Acad. des Inſcrip. et Belles Lettres, tom. xxi.

† Voſſius, Grotius, &c.

‡ Le Pere Combefils, La Mothe-le-Vayer, &c.

begins with proving, that it is neither true nor probable that Procopius was the author; and adds that, if he even were, a declamation ſo extravagant, ſo ſhameleſs, and abſurd, would deſerve no ſort of credit. The only difficulty that remains with me is, that the illuſtrious author of the Spirit of Laws has given ſome degree of ſanction to the fraud. I know the weight of his authority, but even that muſt yield to truth.

Is it poſſible to believe that an hiſtorian, who was likewiſe a ſtateſman, and enjoyed the eſteem of the age in which he lived, could prevail on himſelf, for the paltry and baſe gratification of traducing his benefactors, to leave a work behind him which muſt evidently bring reproach on his own memory, by reducing poſterity to the neceſſity of conſidering him either as the fabricator of a virulent libel, or the meaneſt and moſt ſervile flatterer? Is it credible, that he, who had in all other reſpects maintained the dignity of a judicious hiſtorian, ſhould ſuddenly be ſo loſt to ſenſe and decency, as to deſire that, on his bare recommendation, the character of *a ſtupid blockhead, a compound of ruſticity and folly**, ſhould be fixed on Juſtinian; that wiſe and virtuous old man, who from obſcurity, and from the loweſt ſtation in the army, being elevated, by his valour and his talents, to the higheſt rank, obtained the unanimous voices of the ſenate, the army, and the people, in his favour, and was at laſt raiſed to the imperial throne? Will it be believed, that he who wrote the hiſtory of his own times, with ſuch truth, candour, and wiſdom, could poſſibly ſay of Juſtinian, that he was *ſtupid and ſluggiſh as an aſs, that he ſuffered himſelf to be led by the noſe, and that he frequently pricked up his ears*†? *That he was not a man, but a fury in human ſhape*‡? *That his mother, before ſhe conceived him, had commerce with a demon that was inviſible, but palpable to the touch*‖? *And, in ſhort, that he brought ſuch calamities on the empire, as could not be equalled in the annals of all former ages, either for enormity or number*¶? Or could an author of reputation, after repreſenting Beliſarius as an accompliſhed hero, adorned with triumph and covered with glory, deſcend to call him, at laſt, *a weak and wicked man, deſpiſed by the world, and pointed at as a fool***? and this, too, in the meridian of that hero's ſplendor, when he had recently proved himſelf the ſaviour of the empire, by the total expulſion of the Huns from Thrace?

In the original Greek, ſome have pretended to recognize the ſtyle of Procopius; but can they there trace the ſentiments of his vigorous mind? I will even ſuppoſe him capable of ingratitude, and full of an

* Inſignis homo ſtoliditatis ſummâ cum infantiâ ſummâque cum ruſticitate conjunctæ.

† Nam mirè ſtolidus fuit, & lento quàm ſimillimus aſino, capiſtro facile trahendus, cui & aures ſubinde agitarentur.

‡ Quod verò non homo, ſed, ſub humanâ ſpecie, furia viſus ſit Juſtinianus documento eſſe poſſunt ingentia quibus affecit homines mala: quippe enim ex atrocitate facinorum autoris virium immanitas palam fiat.

‖ Eo gravida antequam eſſet, quandam genii ſpeciem ad ſe ventitaſſe, quæ non ad viſum, ſed ad contactum ſe præberet, accubaretque ſibi, & quaſi maritus ſe conjugem iniret.

¶ Is demum fuit Romanis tot tantorumque malorum autor, quot & quanta audita non ſunt ex omni ſuperiorum etatum memoria.

** Tunc enim verò contemni ab omnibus & veluti demens ſubſannari.

unaccountable

unaccountable rancour to his benefactors; but could ſuch an able writer think ſo puerile a performance capable of effacing his former ſtrain of panegyrick, and overturning the facts on which that panegyrick was founded? It is by no means likely that Procopius the hiſtorian, would ſo far forget himſelf, as gravely to aſſert, that Juſtinian and his miniſters *were not men, but devils who perambulated the earth in human ſhape for the purpoſe of heaping deſtruction on mankind**. For my own part, I ſhould hardly think him capable of ſuch imbecility, had all his contemporaries witneſſed againſt him: and I certainly ſhall not credit any thing ſo ridiculous on the equivocal aſſertion of a ſingle writer, who did not come into the world till five hundred years after his deceaſe.

For theſe reaſons, I have only regarded the genuine work of Procopius. It is that which I have conſulted: it is from thence that I have delineated the character of my hero; his modeſty; his benevolence; his affability; his extreme ſimplicity of manners; and, above all, that vaſt fund of humanity which formed the baſis of his many virtues, and rendered him the idol of the people. 'It was,' ſays Procopius, 'the delight of the citizens of Byzantium, to behold Beli-'ſarius every morning entering the Forum..... He was diſtinguiſh-'ed by his ſize, and the graceful proportions of his ſtature. To the 'dignity of his perſon, he added ſuch an air of meekneſs, benignity, 'and chearful demeanour to all deſcriptions of people, that he might 'have paſſed for a perſon of no uncommon rank or ability..... 'His munificence to the ſoldiers was unbounded..... To the huſ-'bandman, and labourer of the field, he ſhewed ſuch a tender con-'cern, that while he commanded they were certain of experiencing 'the leaſt poſſible injury from the army. His care, indeed, was par-'ticularly extended to the fruits of the earth: he provided with ſoli-'citude that his troops ſhould not trample down the growing corn; 'and, to take any part of the farmer's ſtore, without the permiſſion 'of the owner, was made penal throughout his army†.'

* Hi nunquam homines (mihi) viſi ſunt, ſed pernicioſi demones ..... Humanas induti formas, quaſi ſemi-homines furiæ, ſic univerſum terrarum orbem convulſerint.

† Erat igitur Byſantinis civibus voluptati Beliſarium intueri in forum quotidie prodeuntem..... Pulchritudo hunc magnitudoque corporis honeſtabat. Humilem præterea ſe, benignumque adeò, atque aditu obviis quibuſque perfacilem exhibebat, ut infimæ ſortis viro perſimilis videretur..... In ſuos præcipuè milites munificentiâ cæteros anteibat..... Erga agricultores, agreſteſque homines, tantâ hic indulgentiâ ac providentiâ utebatur, ut Beliſario ductante exercitu, nullam hi vim paterentur. Segetes inſuper, dum in agris matureſcerent, diligentius tuebatur, ne fortè equorum greges has devaſtarent; frugeſque cæteras, invitis dominis, ſuos attingere prohibebat. *Proc. de Bell. Goth. lib.* iii.

BELISA-

BELISARIUS.

CHAP. I.

IN the old age of Juſtinian, the empire, exhauſted by long and violent exertions, began to manifeſt every ſymptom of decay. Adminiſtration was feeble in all it's departments: the laws were become obſolete; the publick treaſury was plundered; and military diſcipline was wholly neglected. The Emperor, wearied by conſtant wars, purchaſed peace from all his enemies with gold; leaving the ſmall remainder of his armies inactive, as if ſoldiers were uſeleſs, and only a burden to the ſtate. The commanders of the inactive troops abandoned themſelves to pleaſure and diſſipation: and hunting, which preſented to their minds a faint image of war, was the chief exertion of their indolent diſpoſitions.

One evening, after the chace was over, a party of theſe military gentlemen were ſupping together at a caſtle in Thrace; when they were informed that a blind old man, conducted by a child, aſked for ſhelter. Youth is naturally compaſſionate, and the old man was admitted. It was autumn; and the cold, which began to be intenſe, having chilled the venerable ſtranger, they gave him a ſeat near the fire.

The entertainment proceeded; conviviality prevailed; and the misfortunes of the ſtate became at length the ſubject of converſation. Here was a wide field for Cenſure, and diſcontented Vanity allowed itſelf the utmoſt freedom of ſpeech. Every one enlarged on the exploits he had performed, and the many more he would have performed, if his merit and his talents had not been neglected. All the calamities of the empire, they agreed, were occaſioned ſolely by the neglect of not truſting the management of the ſtate to exactly ſuch men as themſelves. They legiſlated for the world, as they ſwallowed down their liquor; and every freſh glaſs of wine rendered their ſchemes more and more infallible.

The old man ſat at the fire-ſide, liſtening and ſmiling. One of the company noticing him—'Honeſt friend,' ſays he, 'you ſeem to perceive ſomething pleaſant in our converſation.'—'Pleaſant!' replied the old man: 'no, Sir, not very 'pleaſant; but light and airy, as is na-'tural at your time of life.' This anſwer aſtoniſhed them. 'You think your 'complaints well-founded,' continued the old man; 'and I agree, with you, 'that it was wrong to neglect you: but 'that is one of the moſt trifling evils in 'the world. Lament, rather, that the 'ſtrength and dignity of the empire are 'paſſed away; and that the prince, 'worn out with cares, with watchfulneſs, and the preſſure of years, can no 'longer ſee and act for himſelf, but is 'obliged to employ the eyes and hands 'of unfaithful miniſters. In ſo general a diſaſter, it would be ridiculous 'to think only of ourſelves.'—'It was 'the faſhion of your time, then,' ſaid one of the company, 'for no man to 'care about himſelf! It is at length 'changed, and now every man cares 'for himſelf only.'—'So much the 'worſe,' returned the old man; 'and, 'if that be actually the caſe, to neglect 'you, is only doing you juſtice.'—'How!' ſaid the perſon to whom theſe words were addreſſed, 'do you intrude 'on our hoſpitality, merely to inſult 'us?'—'I inſult you not,' anſwered the old man; 'but ſpeak to you in 'friendſhip, and pay for the ſhelter you 'afford me by telling you the truth.'

Young Tiberius, who has ſince been deſervedly ranked among the moſt virtuous

tuous emperors, happened to be of the party. He was ſtruck with the venerable air of the blind and ſnowy-haired ſage. 'You ſpeak to us,' ſaid he, 'with wiſdom, but not without a little 'ſeverity; for this publick ſpirit which 'you exact is a virtue, but not a duty.' —'In your ſtation it is a duty,' replied the good old man, with firmneſs; 'or, 'rather, it is the baſis of your duty, and 'of all military virtue. Whoever de-'votes himſelf to the ſervice of his coun-'try, ſhould conſider her as an inſol-'vent, incapable of ever paying him; 'ſince that which he hazards for her be-'nefit is without price. He ſhould alſo 'be prepared to find her ungrateful; 'for, if the ſacrifice he makes ariſes not 'from generous motives, he is acting a 'very foolish part. The only true prin-'ciples of action are the love of glory, 'and the ardent enthuſiaſm of virtue. 'Thus actuated, what matters it how our 'ſervices are received? The recompence 'depends not on the caprice of a mini-'ſter, or the diſcernment of a ſovereign 'The common ſoldier, indeed, may b. 'influenced by the baſe deſire of booty; 'he, I can conceive, may riſque his li.e 'for a pittance to maintain it: but you, 'who were born in affluence, and who live 'only to enjoy life, when you renounce 'the ſofter ſcenes of pleaſure to undergo 'fatigue and labour, are voluntarily ex-'poſing yourſelf to danger; can you, 'then, derogate ſo far from the generous 'impulſe, as to beſtow a thought on what 'is to pay you? Do you not perceive, 'that this is a debaſement? Every man 'who makes an object of his ſalary, is 'a ſlave. The magnitude of the ſum 'matters nothing: and the mind which 'is enſlaved for a *talent*, is as venal as 'that which is proſtituted for an *obolus*. 'What I have ſaid of intereſt, I affirm 'of ambition. Honours, titles, rank, 'and the favours of the ſovereign, are 'all wages. He who covets them is a 'hireling. We muſt either give or ſell 'ourſelves: there is no alternative. One 'is the act of freedom, the other of 'ſlavery. You, gentlemen, will in-'cline to that which beſt ſuits your diſ-'poſitions.'—'At this rate, my old 'friend,' ſaid one of the company, 'you place ſovereigns in a very eaſy 'condition.'—'Were my diſcourſe ad-'dreſſed to ſovereigns,' returned the blind man, 'I ſhould tell them that, 'it is your duty to be generous, and 'theirs to be juſt.'—'You admit, then, 'that it is juſt to recompenſe ſervices?' —'Moſt certainly it is: but he to whom 'ſervice is rendered, ſhould have the 'diſpoſal of the reward; and, if it be 'neglected, the more is his misfortune. 'After all, which of us, in weighing 'his own merits, can be ſure of hold-'ing the balance even? In your pro-'feſſion, for example, that every one 'might be dealt with to his ſatisfaction, 'it would be neceſſary that each ſhould 'command in chief, and then who is 'to obey? This, you ſee, is imprac-'ticable. Believe me, though govern-'ment may ſometimes want penetra-'tion, and even equity; ſtill it is more 'diſcerning and juſt in all it's appoint-'ments, than if it were implicitly to 'receive the opinion each of you enter-'tains of himſelf.'—'And who are 'you, that take the liberty to ſpeak 'thus?' ſays the young owner of the caſtle, with an elevation of voice. 'I 'am BELISARIUS!' replied the old man.

The aſtoniſhment and confuſion that ſeized the young gentlemen at the name of Beliſarius, at the name of him who had ſo often conquered in three quarters of the globe, is not to be deſcribed. They ſat motionleſs; and a profound ſilence marked the reſpect with which they were impreſſed. Reverential awe poſſeſſed them; and, forgetting that Beliſarius was blind, they durſt not raiſe their eyes to look at him. Tiberius, at length, ſpoke. 'O venerable man!' ſaid he, 'how unjuſt and cruel has Fortune 'been to thee! to thee, whom the whole 'empire, for thirty years together, felt 'the author of it's glory, and it's flouriſh-'ing condition; till at length vile Ca-'lumny framed a charge of treaſon and 'revolt! You are that hero, whom 'the perſecuting rage of envious men 'loaded with irons, and barbarouſly 'deprived of ſight! And yet, thus 'baſely treated, you can ſtill perſevere 'to inculcate the principles of publick 'ſpirit and diſintereſted love of coun-'try!'—'And from whom,' ſays Beliſarius, 'would you expect to hear 'the leſſons of virtue? Are the ſlaves of 'court favour to be your moraliſts?'— 'Oh! ſhame indelible!' ſays Tiberius, interrupting him; 'unparalleled ingra-'titude! Poſterity will ſcarcely believe 'the monſtrous ſtory!'—'It muſt not be 'diſſembled,' replied Beliſarius, 'that 'my

'my enemies did take me unprovided; 'they ſurprized me a little; I never ex-'pected to be injured to that exceſs of 'outrage. I had, however, been fami-'liar with the idea of dying in the ſer-'vice of the empire; and, whether dead 'or blind, the difference is inconſide-'rable. Devoted to my country, I did 'not except my eyes. All that I hold 'dearer than my eyes, or my life, ſtill re-'mains to me: the honour of my cha-'racter is inviolate; and, above all, the 'virtues of my heart are ſtill mine, un-'conquered by my enemies. The ac-'tions of my life may indeed be effaced 'from the memory of a court, but the 'memory of mankind will be more re-'tentive; and, if it ſhould not, I have 'the conſcious remembrance of having 'done my duty, and that is ſufficient.'

The company, now ſtruck with admiration, ſolicited Beliſarius to make one at the table. 'Excuſe me, gentle-'men,' ſaid he: 'at my age, the beſt 'place is the fire-ſide.' Every civility was tendered to him, and he was much importuned to accept the beſt bed in the caſtle: he contented himſelf with a little ſtraw. 'I have often ſlept harder,' ſays he: 'but this child, who guides 'my ſteps, I recommend to your good 'offices; he is more tender than I am.'

The next morning, as ſoon as there was light enough for his guide, Beliſarius departed before his hoſts, fatigued with the ſport of the preceding day, were yet awake. Being informed, when they aroſe, that the hero had left the place, they propoſed to go in ſearch of him, that they might provide him with a carriage, and ſuch other conveniences as he wanted. 'No,' ſays Tiberius; 'that will be labour in vain: Beliſarius 'has not conceived eſteem enough for 'us, to make him willingly receive any 'obligation at our hands.'

Young Tiberius had ſenſibility and reflection: on his mind an exalted virtue, in the very extreme of misfortune, made the deepeſt impreſſion. 'Ne-'ver,' ſaid he to one of his friends who came to him from the emperor, 'never 'ſhall I forget laſt night's ſolemn ſcene! 'Never will the words of the venerable 'man be eraſed from my memory! Hu-'miliating as they were, his leſſons have 'taught me what a taſk remains on 'my hands, if I aſpire to the dignity of 'my nature, if I mean to be, indeed, 'a man!' An account of this incident reached the ear of Juſtinian, who deſired to have an interview with Tiberius.

Tiberius related the whole with accuracy to the emperor. 'It is impoſſible, 'Sir,' continued he, 'that ſo elevated 'a mind could deſcend to the baſeneſs 'of the conſpiracy laid to his charge. 'I would engage my life that he is 'innocent, if a life like mine were 'worthy of being ſurety for ſo illuſ-'trious a character.'—'I will ſee 'him, and converſe with him,' replied Juſtinian, 'without diſcloſing myſelf to 'him. In the condition of blindneſs to 'which he is reduced, this will not be 'impracticable. Since his releaſe from 'priſon, he cannot have removed him-'ſelf to any conſiderable diſtance. Trace 'his ſteps; and entice him, if poſſi-'ble, to your country-ſeat: thither I 'will come in private.' This command of the emperor Tiberius received with tranſport, and the next day purſued the road Beliſarius had taken.

CHAP. II.

BELISARIUS, in the mean time, begging alms as he went, proceeded on his way to an old ruinous caſtle, where his family expected him. He had given directions to his little guide not to mention his name on the road; but the dignified air of his countenance, and his whole perſon, were ſufficient to intereſt every beholder. Arriving that night at a village, his conductor ſtopped at the door of a houſe which had a ſimple but neat appearance.

The owner was entering with a ſpade in his hand: the mien and features of Beliſarius attracted his attention, and made him curious to know ſo reſpectable a vagrant. 'A poor invalid,' ſays Beliſarius, 'an old decrepid ſoldier!'—'A ſoldier! exclaims the villager, 'and 'that honour is all your recompence!'—'There is no help for it,' replied Beliſarius; 'the greateſt misfortune of a ſo-'vereign is his inability to pay the price 'of all the blood ſpilt in his ſervice.' The heart of the villager was touched by this anſwer, and Beliſarius was invited to partake of his hoſpitality.

'I here introduce,' ſays the maſter of the houſe to his wife, 'a gallant brave 'veteran, who bears the ſeverities of his 'fate with fortitude of mind.' Then turning to Beliſarius—'My honeſt gueſt,

'be not aſhamed of your condition in a 'family which has been inured to miſ-'fortunes: ſit down, for we are going 'to ſupper; and, while we wait to have 'it laid on the table, tell me, pray, 'what wars you have ſerved in?'—'In 'the wars of Italy,' ſays Beliſarius, 'againſt the Goths; in Aſia, againſt 'the Perſians; and in thoſe of Africa, 'againſt the Vandals and the Moors.'

At theſe laſt words, the villager ſtrove in vain to ſuppreſs a deep ſigh. 'At this 'rate, then,' ſaid he, 'you made 'every campaign with Beliſarius?'—'Yes, every campaign; we were never 'aſunder.'—'Indeed! that excellent 'man! that equal compoſure of mind! 'that conſtant uprightneſs! that great-'neſs of ſoul! Is he ſtill living, pray? 'for in this ſolitude it is about five and 'twenty years ſince I have heard what 'is doing in the world.'—'Yes, Beli-'ſarius is ſtill alive.'—'May Heaven 'guard and prolong his days!'—'If he 'heard your wiſhes, your goodneſs 'would affect him tenderly.'—'Very 'likely! And how do they ſay he fares 'at court? In great power, to be ſure; 'adored by every body!'—'Alas, envy 'is ever an attendant on proſperity!'—'Very true: but the emperor ſhould be 'on his guard againſt the enemies of ſo 'great a man; the guardian genius, 'the protector of the empire! He is 'now far advanced in years: but what 'then; he muſt be as great in council, 'as he was formerly in the field. His 'wiſdom, if he is attended to, may per-'haps, prove of more extenſive uſe than 'even his valour.'—'And how,' ſays Beliſarius, inwardly ſoftened, 'how 'was he known to you?'—'Let us ſit 'down to table,' anſwered the villager: 'your queſtion would lead into a tedious 'hiſtory.'

Beliſarius now felt ſome ſecret hints that his hoſt muſt be ſome officer who had formerly ſerved under him, and had reaſon to be contented with his general. During ſupper, the villager was inquiſitive concerning the events of war in Italy and the Eaſt, but was totally ſilent as to Africa. Beliſarius gratified his curioſity in a plain and ſimple ſtile. 'Let us drink,' ſays the hoſt, at the concluſion of the repaſt, 'let us drink 'to the health of your general; and 'may Heaven requite him with bleſ-'ſings for all the evil he heaped on me!'—'He!' replied Beliſarius; 'did he 'injure you?'—'He diſcharged his 'duty, and I do not complain. I have 'learned, in the ſchool of adverſity, to 'compaſſionate the diſtreſſes of man-'kind; and you ſhall know, my honeſt 'friend, how that leſſon was taught me. 'As you have ſerved in Africa, you 'muſt have ſeen the king of the Vandals, 'the unfortunate Gilimer, led by Beli-'ſarius in triumph to Conſtantinople, 'with his wife and children involved in 'his captivity. That very Gilimer has 'opened to you his hoſpitable door! 'you have ſupped with him!'—'Gili-'mer!' exclaimed Beliſarius; 'and has 'not the emperor aſſigned you a better 'lot? He had promiſed——' 'Yes, 'he promiſed; and, to do him juſtice, 'he kept his word. Dignities were of-'fered me, and even the rank of a 'patrician; but I declined them. To 'him who has been a king, and has loſt 'his crown, the only reſource is obſcu-'rity and repoſe!'—'Thou Gilimer!'—'Yes, I am he! I am that unfortunate 'prince; who, you may remember, 'was beſieged on the mountain of 'Papua. There I ſuffered unheard-of 'hardſhips*: the inclemency of the 'winter ſeaſon, the neceſſities of fa-'mine, the miſerable aſpect of a whole 'people driven to the laſt deſpair, and 'ready to devour their very wives and 'children; the unremitting vigilance of 'that brave officer Pharas, who, even 'amidſt the operations of the ſiege he 'carried on, never ceaſed by his re-'monſtrances to awaken my feelings, 'both for myſelf and the miſeries of my 'people; all theſe circumſtances, toge-'ther with the entire confidence I had 'in the uprightneſs of your general, 'prevailed on me at length to lay 'down my arms. With what an air 'of ſober dignity did Beliſarius receive 'me! Every proper attention was paid 'to me, by his command. With what 'addreſs, with what reſpect, did he ſtrive 'to ſoften my affliction! The ſpace of 'near ſix luſtres has elapſed ſince I have

* Vide Procop. de Bello Vandalico, lib. ii.

'dwelt

'dwelt in this ſolitary retreat, and not 'a day has paſſed without a repetition of 'my moſt fervent prayers for Beliſarius.

'I perceive,' ſaid Beliſarius, 'in 'this account of yourſelf, the mild effects of that philoſophy which, even 'on the mountain where you endured 'ſo much, could make you chant your 'calamities in ſong; which gave you, 'when you appeared before Beliſarius, 'that ſerenity of contempt; and, on his 'day of triumph, animated that look of 'magnanimity which aſtoniſhed the emperor Juſtinian.'—'My worthy gueſt,' replied Gilimer, 'the ſtrength and 'weakneſs of our minds depend entirely 'on the light in which things appear 'to us. True conſtancy and fortitude 'firſt ſprung up in my heart when I 'began to conſider the whole world as 'the ſport of fortune. Till then I had 'lived the moſt voluptuous of kings, diſſolved in luxury, and ever entranced 'in the lap of Pleaſure: on a ſudden I 'paſſed from my palace, that ſcene of 'revelry and delight, to the cavern of 'the Moors*; where, pillowed only on 'ſtraw, I ſubſiſted on barley coarſely 'dreſſed, and half roaſted under the 'cinders. Nay, to ſuch hardſhip was 'I reduced, that a loaf of bread, ſent 'to me by the humanity of an enemy, 'was an ineſtimable preſent. From 'this ſituation I fell into captivity, was 'loaded with irons, and walked in the 'conqueror's triumph. In extremities 'like theſe, you will agree with me, 'that the heart muſt either break with 'grief, or riſe ſuperior to the caprice 'of fortune.'

'You find in that compoſure of the 'ſoul,' ſays Beliſarius, 'many re'ſources againſt calamity; and, before 'we part, I promiſe to furniſh you 'with a new motive of conſolation.'

The converſation ended, and each retired to reſt.

Gilimer, at the dawn of day, inſtead of betaking himſelf to the cultivation of his garden, made it his firſt care to enquire how his aged gueſt had paſſed the night. He found him already up, with his ſtaff in his hand, ready to proceed on his journey. 'Will you not,' ſaid he, 'remain with me a few days!'—'That,' replied Beliſarius, 'is not in 'my power: I have a wife and daughter inconſolable during my abſence. 'Farewel! and hear, without emotion, 'what remains to be told you: blind 'and ſuperannuated as I am, Beliſarius will never forget the reception you 'have given him.'—'What do you 'tell me? Who! Beliſarius?'—'It 'is Beliſarius who now embraces 'you.'—'Righteous Heaven!' exclaims Gilimer, half wild with aſtoniſhment, 'Beliſarius blind, and abandoned in his 'old age!'—'Even ſo,' replied Beliſarius; 'and, to ſhew you the extreme of 'cruelty, before they turned him adrift 'to beg his way through the world, his 'enemies put out his eyes.'—'Alas!' ſays Gilimer, in a tone of grief and horror, 'is it poſſible? Who 'could the monſters be!'—'Envious 'men,' replied Beliſarius. 'They 'impeached me of deſigns on the 'crown, when my thoughts were fixed 'only on my grave. They had credit 'enough to ruin me, and I was laid in 'irons. The people at length clamoured loudly for my enlargement: it was 'in vain to reſiſt the popular outcry; but, 'in reſtoring me to liberty, they deprived me of my ſight.'—'And did Juſtinian order it?'—'There the wound 'ſtruck deepeſt! You know with what 'zeal, with what affection, I ſerved him. 'Even now I love him, and grieve that 'he is ſurrounded by wicked men, who 'cloud and blacken the evening of his 'days. When I heard that he himſelf 'pronounced the definitive ſentence, I 'own my conſtancy failed me; the very executioners ſoftened into pity, and 'fell proſtrate at my feet! Now, all is 'over; and, thanks be to Heaven! I 'have but a little time to crawl about, 'thus blind and wretched.'—'Paſs 'that time with me,' ſays Gilimer: 'here, under my roof, cloſe an illuſtrious life.'—'That,' returned Beliſarius, 'would have ſomething ſoothing 'in it; but I muſt give myſelf to my family, and I now go to expire in their 'arms. Farewel!'

Gilimer embraced him, bathed him with his tears, and could hardly quit his hold. At length, with a parting pang, he let him go; and, ſtraining

* Vandali namque omnium ſunt quos ſciam, molliſſimi atque delicatiſſimi; omnium vero miſerrimi Maurusii. *Ibid.*

his eyes after him—'O Proſperity!' ſays he, 'thou cheat, Proſperity! who 'can confide in thee? The warlike he-'ro, the great, the good Beliſarius!— 'Now, indeed, he who digs his garden 'in peace may think himſelf happy.' With theſe words the king of the Vandals reſumed his ſpade.

CHAP. III.

BELISARIUS was now near the aſylum where his family impatiently waited his arrival, when a new incident made him fear that he ſhould never reach it. The inhabitants on the borders of the empire were perpetually making incurſions into Thrace. A party of Bulgarians had invaded the confines, juſt as a rumour was ſpread abroad that Beliſarius, deprived of his eye-ſight, had been liberated from priſon, and was begging his way to his exiled family. The idea of attaching to himſelf ſo conſiderable a man ſoon ſtruck the prince of Bulgaria, who little doubted that Beliſarius would gladly embrace the moſt rapid means of revenge. The road he had taken was known, and orders were accordingly iſſued for a diligent purſuit. Towards the cloſe of day Beliſarius was overtaken: force was not to be reſiſted; he was obliged to mount a ſuperb horſe brought for the purpoſe. Two Bulgarians conducted him, and the hero's guide was obliged to mount behind one of them. 'You 'may truſt to us,' ſaid the Bulgarians; 'the prince our maſter honours your 'virtues, and compaſſionates your miſ-'fortunes.' Beliſarius wiſhed to know what their prince could poſſibly want with him. 'He means,' replied the barbarians, 'to ſate your vengeance with 'the blood of your enemies.'—'Alas!' ſays the old general, 'let him leave me 'unrevenged; his pity is ſuperfluous 'and cruel. I only aſk to die in the 'arms of my family, and you tear me 'from them. Whither would you take 'me? I am harraſſed with fatigue, and 'reſt is become neceſſary.'—'Reſt you 'ſhall have,' anſwered the Bulgarians, 'and to your entire ſatisfaction, if the 'maſter of the neighbouring caſtle 'ſhould chance not to be on his 'guard, or prove armed with a force 'too feeble for reſiſtance.'

This caſtle belonged to an old general, whoſe name was Beſſus. He had commanded at Rome during a ſiege; and, after being guilty of the moſt horrible exactions, retired to this place with a fortune of ten thouſand talents. Beliſarius had inſiſted that he ſhould be proſecuted with the utmoſt ſeverity of the law; but the courtiers, who do not always wiſh to have matters too cloſely inſpected, being entirely of his party, the enquiry was evaded, and Beſſus quitted the court, to live on his own eſtate, in all the luxury of opulence.

Two Bulgarians, who had been diſpatched to reconnoitre the place, reported to the chief, that in the caſtle all was pleaſure and rejoicing; that the misfortune of Beliſarius was the general talk; and that Beſſus celebrated it by a day of feſtivity, as a puniſhment inflicted by the juſtice of Heaven. 'Infamous wretch!' cried the Bulgarians; 'he ſhall not long have it in 'his power to triumph in the downfal 'of ſo great a man as Beliſarius.'

They ſoon arrived at the caſtle: Beſſus was at table, ſurrounded by his ſycophants, one of whom ſung a ſong of adulation, and in his profane ſtanzas celebrated the care of Heaven in the juſtification of his patron, by puniſhing the accuſer with the loſs of his ſight. What more manifeſt indication could there be! Could innocence enjoy a more ſplendid triumph! Beſſus applauded the flattering ſtrain; graciouſly obſerving, that Heaven is always juſt, and that, ſooner or later, the wicked are brought to condign puniſhment. Beſſus was right in his obſervation: for now the Bulgarians, ſword in hand, had taken poſſeſſion of the court-yard; and, leaving Beliſarius to the care of a few ſoldiers, made their way, with terrifick ſhouts, to the banqueting-room. Beſſus turned pale at the ſight; and confuſion and horror ſeized him. His gueſts were thrown into the utmoſt conſternation: without attempting a defence, they fell on their knees, and begged their lives. They were all inſtantly dragged forth to the place where Beliſarius had been left guarded. Beſſus, by the light of the torches, perceived on horſeback a blind old man; he immediately knew him, and beſought his mercy. The old general, ſoftened with

with compaſſion, conjured the Bulgarians to ſpare him and his dependants. 'No,' ſaid the chief, 'no mercy here 'for bad men!' This was the ſignal for ſlaughter; and Beſſus, with all his aſſociates, was put to death on the ſpot. Then, ordering all the domeſticks before him, the commander of the Bulgarians, who ſaw they expected the ſame fate, bade them diſmiſs their fear, and attend him and his party at the table: 'For now,' ſays he, 'we are 'your maſters.' He proceeded to regale himſelf with his followers, and Beliſarius was placed in the ſeat of Beſſus.

The viciſſitudes of fortune now engroſſed the thoughts of Beliſarius, and this laſt incident ſorely grieved him. 'My friends,' ſaid he to the Bulgarians, 'you diſtreſs me much, by ſhed-'ding the blood of my countrymen. 'Beſſus, it is true, was guilty of ava-'rice and inhumanity: I have ſeen 'him the author of a famine at Rome; 'and, in the midſt of the publick miſe-'ry, ſelling out bread at a moſt exorbi-'tant price, without any feeling for the 'poor, who were unable to buy the ne-'ceſſaries of life. The juſtice of Hea-'ven has overtaken him at laſt, and I 'cannot ſay that he did not merit his 'fate: but yet this havock, done in my 'name, is a ſtain to my honour. Ei-'ther diſpatch me, too, or promiſe that 'no outrage of this ſort ſhall again 'happen while I am among you.' They promiſed to reſtrain themſelves for the future to ſelf-defence: but Beſſus's caſtle was plundered; and the next morning, the Bulgarians, loaded with booty, ſet forward with Beliſarius.

As ſoon as they approached the camp, the king came out to meet Beliſarius; and, receiving him in his arms, exclaimed, in a tranſport of joy —'Come, my father, and decide whe-'ther we are the barbarians! All aban-'doned by your own country, you ſhall 'find, among us, friends and avengers.' He then led him by the hand to his tent, and intreated him to repoſe himſelf, giving orders that every thing ſhould favour his ſlumber. In the evening, after a ſumptuous repaſt, at which the name of Beliſarius was celebrated by all the barbarian chiefs, the king withdrew with him to a private conference. He began by obſerving, that it was unneceſſary to expatiate on the cruelty which had been practiſed. 'The crime,' continued he, 'is horrible; the venge-'ance ſhould be the ſame. Your tyrant, 'with all his accomplices, muſt be bu-'ried under the ruins of the Imperial 'throne and palace: his city ſhall be 'wrapt in flames, and it's fragments 'heaped on the emperor's head. Be 'thou, illuſtrious old man! be thou 'the guide of my armies; inſtruct me 'how to conquer, and to expiate your 'wrongs. They have not robbed you 'of the mind's eye; the light of wiſ-'dom is ſtill yours. Teach me 'to ruſh on them by ſurprize; to aſ-'ſault them within their ramparts. 'Let us exterminate their empire, and 'not leave a trace of it on this ſide of 'the ſeas. If the ſecond rank in our 'new dominion will not ſuffice you, 'divide with me the ſupreme dignity. 'Let the tyrant of Byzantium, before 'he dies beneath repeated blows, be-'hold you once more make your 'triumphal entry!'—'And would you 'have me, then,' ſaid Beliſarius, after a pauſe, 'would you have me juſtify 'him for depriving me of my ſight? 'It is, Sir, no new thing for Beliſarius 'to decline the offer of crowns. 'Carthage and Italy invited my accept-'ance. I was then young, and in 'the ſeaſon for Ambition; Perſecution, 'even then, began to ſhew herſelf, but 'I was not the leſs inviolably at-'tached to my prince and my coun-'try. The duty which then bound 'me continues unextinguiſhed, and 'nothing can induce me to renounce 'it. When I promiſed allegiance to 'the emperor, I hoped to find him 'juſt; but I made no tacit reſervation 'of a right to defend, much leſs to re-'venge myſelf, if he ſhould prove 'otherwiſe. Expect not from me trea-'ſon or revolt againſt him. And how 'would you be benefited by my per-'jury? What valuable ſervice could you 'expect from a blind old man, who 'has not only loſt his ſight, but the 'force and vigour of his mind? The 'enterprize you propoſe is far above 'my ability, perhaps above your own. 'In the preſent relaxed ſtate of govern-'ment, the emperor appears an eaſy 'conqueſt: but he is only grown indo-'lent; and, perhaps, to rouze him from

'his

'his languor, and re-animate his spirit, it were desirable for him that such an attack should be commenced. The city, which you seem to think so assailable, is inhabited by a people trained to war: and then, what men are there still left to lead them on! If the superannuated Belisarius may nearly be numbered with the dead, yet Narses lives; and even Narses has such competitors for equal glory, as Mundus, Hermes, Salomon, and many others of a warlike genius. Time alone, believe me, with his imperceptible hand, must sap the foundations, and work the downfal, of that great empire. You may, indeed, commit a ravage, but that is but the war of robbers; your ambition will aspire to an enterprize more worthy of you. Justinian desires only to form alliances and confederacies of friendship: let me add, there is no sovereign on earth who would not be honoured by an alliance with him; and, Sir, it depends on yourself to——' 'No,' interrupted the king, 'I never will be the friend of Justinian. I will hold no alliance with the man who owes every thing to you; and, in return, has robbed you of your sight. Will you be the associate of my throne, the director of my councils, and the genius of my armies? That is the question between us.'—'My life,' replied Belisarius, 'is in your hands; but nothing can absolve me from the allegiance I owe my lawful sovereign. Depressed as I am, had I the means of serving him, even though it were against yourself, he might still as safely rely on me as in my day of prosperity.'—'This is an extraordinary sort of virtue!' said the Bulgarian. 'Woe to the people,' replied Belisarius, 'to whom it appears extraordinary. Do you not perceive that it is the foundation of good order in society? No member of any community whatever should arrogate to himself a right to be his own judge, and his own avenger; this is an obvious, a self-evident truth. The right of nature is transferred to the magistrate; and, were it otherwise, there would be as many rebels as discontented spirits. Would you, who now court me to punish my master for injustice, allow the same privilege to your own soldiers?'—'Would I allow it?' says the Bulgarian; 'they have it without my allowance; but fear restrains it within due bounds.'—'And with us, Sir,' returned Belisarius, 'virtue is the restraint: that is an advantage resulting from the manners; from manners formed by civilization, the parent of social happiness; and social happiness, let me tell you, will never be rightly understood where the institutions of true policy have not been received. I will speak to you with the freedom of a man who has nothing left either to fear or to hope. What sort of subjects do you govern, Sir? A race inured to warfare; that is their best resource: and that very warfare to which they are trained banishes every idea of the right use of peace; inclines them to neglect the valuable riches of labour and industry; to trample on the laws of natural justice, and seek a precarious good in ruin and destruction. If you will place before your eyes the consequences that must attend your boundless ambition, you will perceive how necessarily it follows that, to lay waste the territories of the empire, you must leave your own without labourers, barren and uncultivated; that, in order to subsist one part of the human species, you must massacre another; and that your own subjects must fatten, with their blood, the very land which they cover with desolation.'—'And will not,' said the king, 'the influence of war be the same on the subjects of the empire?'—'By no means,' replied Belisarius; 'and, besides, the object of our arms is very different. The end aimed at by our wars is publick tranquillity, that we may enjoy the fruits of peace, as the purchase of our victories.'—'It is easy to be generous,' says the Bulgarian, 'when we have the strongest side. Let us break off the conference. You are still illustrious in misery, and I honour your unshaken fidelity, which deserved a better recompence. Repose yourself, for this night, in my tent; you shall be lodged near my own person. To-morrow it shall depend on yourself to direct your guides which way you will be conducted.'—'To the place where they seized me,' said Belisarius, and then retired to the comforts of a pure and tranquil sleep.

The next day the King of Bulgaria took

took leave of the good old general, and would have loaded him with rich preſents. 'They are,' ſays Beliſarius, 'the ſpoils of my country; and you 'would bluſh for me, if I ſuffered my-'ſelf to be ſo enriched.' Some neceſſary food for himſelf and his guide was all he could be induced to accept; and the ſame party as laid violent hands on him, now eſcorted him to the place from whence he had been conveyed to the Bulgarian camp.

CHAP. IV.

BELISARIUS was now not more than twelve miles from the caſtle where his family had retired; but, being exhauſted by the long journey, he aſked his little guide, if there was not ſome village in ſight, where he might reſt his wearied limbs? 'There 'is one,' ſaid the youth, 'but it is a 'great way off. Let the guards take 'you to it.'—'No,' replied Beliſarius, 'I ſhould expoſe the place to the plun-'der of theſe rovers.' And he diſmiſſed his eſcort.

Arriving at the village, he was aſtoniſhed to hear a cry of—*There he is! That's him! It is he himſelf!* 'What does 'all this mean?' ſaid Beliſarius. 'It 'is a whole family,' returned his guide, 'running to meet you.' By this time an old man came forward from the crowd. 'Worthy gentleman,' ſaid he, 'may we crave to know who you are?' —'You plainly ſee,' replied Beliſarius, 'that I am a poor indigent wretch, and 'not a gentleman.'—'An indigent 'wretch!' exclaimed the peaſant: 'that 'is what occaſions our curioſity; for 'we have a report here that, wretched 'as you ſeem, you are Beliſarius.'— 'Lower your voice, my honeſt friend,' replied the general; 'and, if my miſ-'fortunes touch you, afford me a ſhel-'ter under your roof.' Theſe words were ſcarcely uttered, when he felt the villager embracing his knees: he raiſed the honeſt countryman, and went with him to an humble cot.

'Fall down, my children,' ſaid the villager to his ſon and two daughters; 'fall down at the feet of this illuſtrious 'hero. It was he who protected us from 'the ravages of the Huns; and, but for 'him, our little habitation had been re-'duced to aſhes; but for him, my chil-'dren, your father would have been but-'chered before your eyes, and your 'babes would have been torn from 'you, and hurried into captivity; but 'for him, you would never again have 'raiſed your heads. You are indebted to 'him for life, and all that is dearer than 'life. Venerate him the more for his 'preſent condition; reſpect his misfor-'tunes; and weep over your unhappy 'country.'

Beliſarius, diſſolving inwardly with tenderneſs at the grateful ſentiments of this little family, and overpowered by their bleſſings on his head, could only anſwer them with the dumb eloquence of his embraces. 'Condeſcend, illuſtri-'ous hero!' ſaid the two women, 'to 'receive in your arms theſe two little 'innocents, who have found in you 'a ſecond father. We ſhall never ceaſe 'to awaken in their memories a due 'ſenſe of the honour they will now re-'ceive by ſaluting their great deliverer, 'and being careſſed in his embraces.' Each mother preſented her own child, and placed him on the general's knees. The infants ſmiled; and, raiſing their arms, ſeemed to thank him for his complacency. 'And can you now,' ſaid Beliſarius, 'think me an object 'of compaſſion? Does there at this 'moment breathe a man more ſin-'cerely happy than myſelf? But, 'tell me, how has it happened that 'you had any knowledge of me?' —'A young nobleman,' replied the villager, 'paſſed through this place 'yeſterday, and enquired if we had not 'ſeen a blind old man go by: you an-'ſwer the deſcription he gave us. We 'aſſured him we had ſeen no ſuch per-'ſon. He then charged us to keep a 'good look-out, and let you know, 'that a friend expects you at the place 'to which you are going. He ſaid you 'were in want of every thing, and re-'queſted us to pay you all the atten-'tion in our power: he even promiſed 'to requite us for it. Alas! we told 'him that we were all variouſly em-'ployed, ſome in the labours of the 'field, others in domeſtick cares, and 'had but little leiſure to gape after tra-'vellers as they paſs by. "Then quit "your employments," ſaid the young 'lord, "and omit every thing, rather "than the acts of benevolence the good

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" old man is entitled to: he is your " protector, your deliverer. It is Beli- " ſarius whom I recommend to your " diligence." And then he told ' us the whole ſtory of your ſufferings. ' At the ſound of a name ſo beloved ' and honoured, imagine to yourſelf the ' agitation of our hearts! My ſon ' watched all night long for his general, ' for he had the honour to fight under ' your banners when you expelled the ' invaders of Thrace; and my daugh- ' ters, at the dawn of day, were at the ' threſhold of the door, and there con- ' tinued ſtraining their eyes with eager ' expectation. At length we have found ' you: command us as you pleaſe; every ' thing we have is yours. The noble- ' man who deſires to ſee you has more ' in his power to give; but, give what ' he may, he will not do it with a better ' heart than we offer our little all.'

While thus the father diſcourſed, the ſon, in a fixed attitude before the hero, viewed him with a penſive air, his hands claſped in each other; conſternation, pity, and reſpect, riſing by turns, and diffuſing themſelves over his countenance.

' My good friend,' ſays Beliſarius to the old villager, ' I thank you for ' theſe marks of your goodneſs. I have ' enough to ſupport me on my way ' to my laſt retreat: but, pray inform ' me, is your happineſs equal to your ' benevolence? Your ſon, you ſay, ' carried arms under me: I feel ' myſelf intereſted about him. Is ' he prudent, careful, and induſtrious? ' Does he prove a good huſband and a ' good father?'—' He is,' replied the old man, ' all my joy and comfort. He ' quitted the army on the death of ' his elder brother, but he quitted it ' ſeamed with honourable ſcars. He re- ' lieves me from labour, and is the prop ' of my old age! His wife is the ' daughter of my friend, and Heaven ' has ſmiled on their union. He is ' of a ſanguine, lively temper; ſhe of ' a mild and amiable diſpoſition. My ' daughter, who ſtands before you, is ' alſo happily ſettled. I gave her in ' marriage to a young man of good mo- ' rals, and they live in mutual affection. ' Every thing goes on to my heart's ' content; and they have raiſed grand- ' children to me, in whom I fancy I ' am renewing my youth. In the ' hopes that they will cheriſh my me- ' mory, and bleſs me when I am gone, ' I draw towards my grave with little ' regret.'—' Alas! my good friend,' ſaid Beliſarius, ' you excite my envy! ' I had two ſons, my beſt, my darling ' hope! I ſaw them both expire at my ' ſide! An only daughter is all that ' is left me in my age; and ſhe, alas! ' has too much ſenſibility to bear my ' condition and her own. But, thanks ' be to Heaven, my two boys died fight- ' ing for their country!' Theſe words penetrated the heart of the young man, who had been attentively liſtening to every ſyllable that fell from the lips of his old commander.

The ſupper, conſiſting of plain country fare, was ſerved up: but Beliſarius, by his lively repreſentations of the happineſs that dwells with obſcurity, gave it the value of the moſt ſumptuous repaſt. ' Calm and retired tranquillity,' ſaid he, ' is the happieſt ſtate of man; ' and yet, ſo little are the ſolid bleſſings ' of life underſtood, it is the ſtate which ' is leaſt envied!'

The ſon of the maſter of the houſe remained ſilent during ſupper, with his eyes fixed on Beliſarius. He was loſt in contemplation: his feelings grew ſtronger as he gazed; his countenance every moment ſettled into a deeper gloom, and looked more intenſe with reflection, and fiercer with the various emotions that ſucceeded each other. ' My ſon,' ſaid the good old villager, ' is recalling to his imagination ' all your battles, and he regards you ' with an ardent eye.'—' He finds it ' difficult,' replied Beliſarius, ' to re- ' collect his general.'—' The enemies ' of my general,' ſaid the young man, ' have defaced him enough to make it ' difficult to know him; but he is too ' near the hearts of his ſoldiers to be ' ever forgotten by them.'

When Beliſarius took leave of this worthy family, ' I ſhould be glad,' ſaid the young man, ' if my general will ' permit me to attend him a little way ' on his journey.' As they walked along, ' I could wiſh,' ſaid the young man, ' that you would order your ' guide to go on before us; I have ſome- ' thing for your private ear. The con- ' dition, Sir, to which they have re- ' duced you, fills me with indignation. ' They have left you a terrible example

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'of ingratitude, and the baſeſt perfidy: 'it makes me even look with horror on 'my country; and in proportion as I 'was formerly proud of, ſo do I now 'bluſh for, every drop of blood I ſpilt 'in her ſervice. I hate the place where 'I was born; and look with pity on 'the children whom I have cauſed to 'be brought into the world.'—'Hold, 'my friend!' ſaid Beliſarius; 'where 'is the country in which honeſt men 'never fall victims to the wicked?'— 'But this,' returned the young ſoldier, 'has no example. There is ſomething 'in your wrongs inconceivable. Tell 'me who was the author of them? I 'have a wife and children; but I will 'recommend them to God, and to my 'father, and go directly to tear out 'the heart of the barbarous villain 'who——' 'Alas, my child!' cried Beliſarius, claſping him in his arms, 'thy pity blinds and miſleads thee. 'Shall I make of a brave man a traitor? 'of a good ſoldier an aſſaſſin? of a 'father, of a huſband, of an affec-'tionate ſon, a villain and a madman? 'This, indeed, were to make me de-'ſerve all the evil which I have ſuffered. 'To comfort your father, and rear up 'your children, you have quitted the 'ſervice of your country; and now, 'for a dying old man, to whom your 'zeal muſt be uſeleſs, would you aban-'don your father and your children! 'Tell me, do you imagine that, could 'you bathe me in the blood of my 'enemies, I ſhould become young and 'vigorous? will it reſtore my loſt organs 'to me? When you have made your-'ſelf criminal, ſhall I be the leſs mi-'ſerable?'—'No,' replied the young man; 'but the bloody cataſtrophe of a 'villain will ſtrike every guilty mind 'with horror. To make him a terrible 'example to the world, I will ſeize the 'monſter at the foot of the throne, or 'even of the altar; and, glutting my 'poniard in his heart, will thunder in 'his ear—"Beliſarius ſtrikes the blow!" —'And by what title,' ſays Beliſarius in a deciſive tone, 'do you mean to exe-'cute my revenge? Have I transferred 'a right to you which I do not poſſeſs 'myſelf? or, do you mean to aſſume 'that right in defiance of every law?'— 'Let law be truly adminiſtered,' ſaid the young man, 'and the ſubject will 'depend upon the juſtice of his coun-'try; but, ſince it is perverted, ſince it 'gives no protection to innocence and 'virtue, but connives at vice, and acts 'in colluſion with the guilty, it is time 'to abjure civil ſociety, and reſort to 'the primitive laws of natural juſtice.' —'My worthy good friend,' replied Beliſarius, 'that is the reaſoning of 'ruffians, of every lawleſs banditti! 'To ſee the laws warped to evil pur-'poſes is indeed grievous to a juſt and 'honeſt mind; but the caſe would be 'ſtill more grievous, if they were to 'ſuffer open violation. Enfeebled laws 'are moſt certainly an evil, but a tran-'ſitory evil; their total overthrow would 'be a laſting calamity. You would 'ſtrike guilt with terror, and yet you 'are going to encourage it by your 'example! My calamities, generous 'youth, have inſpired you with noble 'ſentiments: Would you debaſe thoſe 'ſentiments by an atrocious deed? Shall 'the tender ſenſations of the heart be 'turned to horror? I conjure you, in 'the name of that virtue which you 'love, diſhonour it not by fatal raſh-'neſs. Let it never be ſaid that virtue 'has guided the hand of an aſſaſſin.'

'If their cruelty,' ſaid the young ſoldier, 'had ſpent it's rage on me, I 'could, perhaps, arm myſelf with for-'titude to bear the worſt; but, when a 'man renowned, when Beliſarius—— 'No, I will never forgive it!'—'But I 'forgive it,' replied Beliſarius. 'No-'thing but my intereſt in this buſineſs 'can provoke your fury; and, if I re-'nounce my own reſentments, will you 'go farther than I am willing to do? 'Let me tell you that, if I were in-'clined to expiate my wrongs by the 'blood of my enemies, whole nations 'are ready to arm themſelves in my 'cauſe. But I am reſigned to my fate: 'imitate my example; allow me to be 'a judge of what is right and honour-'able; and, if you find within your 'breaſt a ſpirit to encounter death, re-'ſerve that ſpirit for the glorious occa-'ſion of ſerving your country and your 'ſovereign.'

The ardour of the young ſoldier ſubſided, at theſe words, into wonder and admiration. 'Forgive me, general,' ſaid he, 'forgive the vehemence which 'I now bluſh to own: the outrage of

'your fortune drove me to exceſs; 'while you condemn my zeal, excuſe 'it alſo.'—'I do more,' ſaid Beliſarius; 'I eſteem it: it is the emotion, 'the tranſport of a generous mind; but 'let me now direct it. Your family 'will have need of you; live for them; 'and let your children imbibe from 'you an averſion to the enemies of Be'liſarius.'—'Name them,' ſaid the young ſoldier with impatience, 'and I 'promiſe you my children ſhall grow 'up from the cradle in mortal hatred 'of them.'—'My enemies,' replied Beliſarius, 'are the Scythians, the 'Huns, the Bulgarians, the Sclavo'nians, the Perſians, and all the ene'mies of my country.'—'Thou mira'cle of virtue!' ſaid the young villager, proſtrating himſelf at the feet of the hero. Beliſarius embraced him; and, taking his leave—'There are,' ſays he, 'in this mixed ſtate, inevitable evils; 'all that a juſt man can do is not to 'deſerve the portion of ill that may be 'his lot. If, hereafter, the abuſe of pow'er, the perverſion of laws, and the 'proſperity of bad men, ſhould move 'your indignation, think of Beliſarius. 'Farewel!'

CHAP. V.

THE philoſophick ſoul of Beliſarius was now on the point of encountering a trial ſtill more ſevere than any he had yet met with—But it will in this place be proper to relate what happened when the venerable hero was firſt ſeized, and hurried away to priſon.

On the night when he was loaded with fetters, and, like a ſtate-criminal, thrown into gaol, amazement, grief, and conſternation, filled his palace. The alarm which ſeized his wife Antonina, and Eudoxa his only daughter, gave a picture of deſpair and agony in their moſt ſtriking colours. At length, Antonina recovering from her fright, and calling to mind the favours which the empreſs had laviſhed on her, began to flatter herſelf that her apprehenſions were groundleſs; ſhe condemned, with ſelf-reproach, the weakneſs ſhe had betrayed. Admitted to an intimacy the moſt familiar with Theodora, the companion and ſharer of all her ſocial pleaſures, ſhe depended on ſupport from that quarter, or at leaſt ſhe believed that Theodora was her friend. In this perſuaſion, ſhe attended the levee of the empreſs; and, falling on her knees in the face of the whole court—'Madam,' ſaid ſhe, 'if to have defended and ſav'ed the empire on various occaſions has 'been the diſtinguiſhed lot of Beliſa'rius; that the guilt now imputed to him 'may be examined in open day-light, 'and that his accuſers may confront 'him at the tribunal of the emperor, 'is all the recompence he aſks for his 'generous patriotick labours: a free tri'al, and the opportunity of confound'ing his enemies, is the only favour he 'can now with honour accept.' Theodora made her a ſign to riſe; and, with a look of frigid indifference, anſwered—'If Beliſarius be innocent, he has 'nothing to fear; if the charge be 'true, he is no ſtranger to the clemency 'of his maſter, and he knows the ſoft 'acceſſes to his heart. You may with'draw, Madam, in full confidence that 'I regard you; I ſhall not eaſily forget 'that I have diſtinguiſhed you by my 'favours.' This cold reception, and the abrupt manner of the concluſion, quite overpowered Antonina: ſhe retired pale and trembling; and, of all the beholders, not one dared to lift an eye towards her. Barſames, whom ſhe met, would have paſſed her by unnoticed, if ſhe had not addreſſed herſelf to him. Barſames was the miniſter of the treaſury, and the favourite of Theodora. She entreated him to inform her what was the crime laid to the charge of Beliſarius. 'I inform you, 'Madam!' ſays Barſames; 'I am to'tally in the dark! a ſtranger to this 'affair. I have nothing in my power; 'I know nothing, nor do I interfere in 'any thing but the duty of my depart'ment. If every body followed the 'ſame rule, the peace of the world would 'be leſs diſturbed.'

'Ah!' ſays Antonina, 'the plot, I 'ſee, is deeply laid, and Beliſarius is 'undone.' A little farther on ſhe met a man who owed his all to her; and who, on the preceding day, was entirely devoted to her ſervice. She made an attempt to expoſtulate and canvas the affair with him; but, without deigning to hear her—'I know your misfortunes,' ſaid he, 'and I am ſorely mortified; 'but

'but I muſt beg your pardon; I have 'favours to ſolicit, and there is not a 'moment to be loſt: I muſt leave you, 'Madam; but be aſſured that nobody 'is more zealouſly attached to you.' Antonina then went in ſearch of her daughter; and, in an hour's time, ſhe received directions to depart the city. The old caſtle, already mentioned, was aſſigned for the place of her exile.

The very ſight of this caſtle, ſolitary and in ruin, filled the heart of Antonina with conſternation: ſhe here conſidered herſelf as buried; and a fit of illneſs ſeized her ſoon after her arrival. The tender Eudoxa, diſtracted by the idea of a father impeached, loaded with irons, and given up a prey to his enemies; ſtill more deeply affected at the ſight of a mother ready to break her heart with anguiſh; underwent the ſevereſt agonies of mind. All her days, her beſt, her youthful days, were conſumed in offices of tenderneſs to her afflicted mother: each night ſhe was bathed in tears; and in that ſuſpence of pain, when weary nature ſinks down to reſt, her ſlumbers were diſturbed by the moſt horrid dreams. The image of her father, plunged into a dungeon's gloom, and bending under the weight of galling chains, was ever preſent to her; and her apprehenſions for her mother increaſed the terrors of the viſionary ſcene.

Antonina had been converſant in courts, and the thorough knowledge ſhe had of them for ever painted to her fancy the rage of perſecution let looſe againſt her huſband. 'What a triumph,' ſaid ſhe, 'for thoſe malignant ſpirits, who 'for a ſeries of years have thought 'themſelves depreſſed by the virtues of 'a great and virtuous man! How will 'they now exult in his downfal! I ſee 'before me the ghaſtly ſmile of Malice; 'the myſterious air of Calumny, that 'affects to conceal what it knows, and 'would appear tender of the man whom 'it is ready to ſtab. Deteſted flatterers! Ye fawning ſycophants! I ſee ye 'all, and I hear your cruel inſults in 'our misfortunes. Oh, my daughter! 'in your diſtreſs you may at leaſt enjoy the conſolation that you have nothing to reproach yourſelf! As to me, 'I have more reaſon to bluſh for my 'former felicities than my preſent calamities. The ſage advice, and all 'the prudent leſſons, your father uſed 'to give me, were little heeded by me; 'they were too importunate. In vain 'did he counſel me to ſhun the baits of 'pleaſure, and of courts; to think my 'trueſt dignity conſiſted in ſimplicity of 'manners; that the ſincereſt happineſs 'was to be found in domeſtick enjoyment; and that it ſhould be the triumph 'of my ſex to bid adieu to vanities that 'would vaniſh like a dream, or end in 'ſhame. His remonſtrances appeared 'to me to be the overflowings of ſpleen, 'and I complained of his ſullen humour to his very enemies. What 'giddy inattention was mine! and now 'what a ſad reverſe! The burſting of 'the ſtorm awakened me to reflection; 'I never ſaw the abyſs till I was tumbling into it. If you knew, my child, 'the cold averted air with which the 'empreſs diſmiſſed me! even ſhe, to 'whom my ſoul was enſlaved! whoſe 'every whim was the rule of my actions, the inclination of my heart! 'Oh! that court, which on the eve of 'our misfortunes ſmiled with a general 'complacence on me! the falſe, inſidious train! not one of them, when they 'ſaw me leaving it like an outcaſt, with 'eyes dejected and ſwoln with tears, 'not one of them would acknowledge 'me! In courts, my child, misfortune 'has the qualities of a plague, and 'makes you ſhunned by all.'

Such were the reflections of this unfortunate woman, whoſe eyes were now opened to the fallacies of courts, though the affections of her heart were not yet wholly alienated from them. She deſpiſed her former vanities, and yet loved them ſtill.

An entire year paſſed away without any tidings of Beliſarius: a conſpiracy had been detected; the hero was charged with being the author of it; and the voice of his enemies, which was called the publick voice, pronounced him guilty of the treaſon. The principal conſpirators had ſuffered death in determined ſilence, without the ſmalleſt intimation of their leader. On this was founded preſumptive proof againſt Beliſarius; and, for want of poſitive evidence, he was left to languiſh in a dungeon, in hopes that his death would ſuperſede the neceſſity of clear conviction. In the mean time, the old diſbanded ſoldiery, who now were mingled with the people, clamoured for the enlargement of their general, and were ready

to vouch for his innocence: a popular inſurrection followed, univerſally menacing to force the priſon-doors, unleſs he was immediately ſet at liberty. This tumult enraged the emperor. Theodora perceiving it, managed artfully to ſeize the moment of ill-humour and paſſion, knowing that then only he was capable of injuſtice. 'Well,' ſaid ſhe, 'let him be given up to the populace, 'after he is rendered unable to com-'mand them.' The horrid advice prevailed: it was the deciſive judgment againſt Beliſarius.

When the people ſaw him come forth without an eye in his head, a general burſt of rage and lamentation filled the city. Beliſarius appeaſed the tumult. 'My friends and countrymen,' ſaid he, 'your emperor has been impoſed on. 'Every man is liable to error: it is our 'buſineſs to regret Juſtinian's error, and 'to ſerve him ſtill: my innocence is now 'the only good they have left me; let 'me poſſeſs it ſtill. The revolt which 'you threaten cannot reſtore what I 'have loſt, but it may deprive me of the 'only conſolation that remains in my 'breaſt.' The ſwelling ſpirits of the populace ſubſided at theſe words into a perfect calm; they offered him all they were worth. Beliſarius thanked them. 'All I will aſk,' ſays he, 'is one of 'your boys, to guide my ſteps to the 'aſylum where my family expects 'me.'

The adventure with the Bulgarians carried Beliſarius out of the way, while Tiberius preſſed forward to the retreat of the exiled family. The rattling of a carriage in the court-yard of the caſtle gave a ſudden emotion of hope and joy to Antonina, and her daughter Eudoxa: the latter ran forth in the ſtrongeſt agitations of mind; but, alas! inſtead of her father, diſappointed to ſee a youthful ſtranger, ſhe returned diſconſolate to her mother, and with a ſigh pronounced—'It is not he!'

Anſelmo, a faithful old ſervant of the family, appearing in the court-yard, 'Pray, honeſt friend,' ſaid Tiberius, 'is not this the retreat of Beliſarius?'—'His wife and daughter expect him 'here,' ſaid the faithful Anſelmo, 'but 'their hopes have hitherto proved abor-'tive. Would to Heaven I could ſuffer 'for him, ſo he were at liberty!'—'He 'is at liberty,' replied Tiberius; 'he 'is on his journey hither; you will ſee 'him ſoon; he ought to have been ar-'rived before now.'—'Oh! walk in, 'walk in, and communicate the news 'to his family! I will ſhew you the 'way.—Madam,' exclaimed Anſelmo, running eagerly towards Antonina. 'I have news for you, Madam! re-'joice, and be of good heart: my maſter 'lives; he is free; they have reſtored 'him to you; a generous young man 'brings the happy tidings; he thought 'to have found him here.' At theſe words, Antonina ſummoned up all her ſpirits: 'Where is the generous ſtran-'ger, the virtuous youth, who inte-'reſts himſelf in our afflictions? Shew 'him in; let me ſee him!' Antonina uttered theſe words with the quick vehemence of joy. 'Our miſeries are end-'ed now,' exclaimed Eudoxa, throwing herſelf on her mother's bed, and folding her in her arms. 'My father 'lives, he is at liberty, and we ſhall 'ſee him once more: let us, my deareſt 'mother, forget our woes; Heaven has 'not deſerted us, we all ſhall ſtill be 'happy.'

'And do you then recal me back to 'life!' ſaid Antonina to Tiberius. 'Has my huſband triumphed over his 'enemies at laſt?' Tiberius, inwardly afflicted that he had only a mockery of joy to offer, calmly anſwered, that Beliſarius was certainly living; that he had ſeen him; that he had converſed with him; and, imagining he had reached his home, he was come to offer him the ſervices of a good neighbour.

Eudoxa, whoſe eyes were fixed on Tiberius, was aſtoniſhed at the air of ſadneſs which he in vain ſought to diſguiſe. 'You bring,' ſaid ſhe, 'the 'ſweeteſt conſolation to our afflicted 'minds; and yet, far from rejoicing at 'the welcome news, you ſeem plunged 'in the deepeſt affliction! Is it, then, 'our wretchedneſs that depreſſes you? 'O that my father was arrived, to 'bring health to the dear moiety of 'himſelf, and you ſhould ſoon ſee if 'riches are eſſential to our happi-'neſs!'

Nature, on ſuch occaſions, is of herſelf ſo attracting, that Eudoxa needed no other charms than theſe ſentiments to ſecure the affections of Tiberius. The beauty of her perſon engaged not his attention; he perceived only a virtuous and affectionate daughter, whoſe fortitude,

titude, piety, and duty to her father, rendered her ſuperior to misfortune. 'Miſtake not, Madam,' ſaid he, 'the ſentiments which I could not repreſs, for 'the inſolence of diſguſting pity. To 'whatever ſtate Beliſarius and his family may be reduced, their misfortunes themſelves will render them ſtill 'greater objects of envy.'—'Why,' replied the mother, 'do you talk of miſfortune? If they have given my huſband his liberty, they are ſatisfied of 'his innocence, and it follows that he 'muſt be reſtored to his former dignity 'and poſſeſſions.'

'Madam,' ſaid Tiberius, 'it would 'be cruel to flatter you reſpecting his 'condition. He owes his enlargement 'merely to the interpoſition of the people. The court has only yielded to 'the dread of an inſurrection; and, in 'thus acquieſcing, they have ſent him 'home as miſerable as it was in their 'power to make him.'

'It matters not, my dear mother! he 'is living,' replied the amiable Eudoxa; 'and, if they do but leave us a little 'land to cultivate, we ſhall not be leſs 'happy than all the honeſt villagers we 'meet with in the fields.'—'O Heavens!' exclaimed Tiberius, 'the 'daughter of Beliſarius reduced to ſo 'mean a ſtation!'—'Mean!' replied Eudoxa; 'Why? It was not too mean 'for the heroes of Rome, when 'Rome was virtuous and free. Beliſarius will not bluſh to be equalled 'with Regulus. My mother and myſelf, during our exile, have habituated 'ourſelves to domeſtick cares and 'œconomy; and my illuſtrious father 'ſhall be cloathed with garments made 'from thread ſpun by his daughter's 'hand.'

Tiberius could no longer ſuppreſs his tears, as he witneſſed the pure and virtuous joy that filled the heart of this amiable girl. 'Alas!' ſighed he to himſelf, 'what a terrible ſhock is preparing 'to awaken her from the ſweet illuſion!' His eyes were fixed on the ground; and he ſtood before her in ſpeechleſs agony.

CHAP. VI.

BELISARIUS was at this very moment entering the court-yard of the caſtle. The faithful Anſelmo ſaw him; advanced; recognized his maſter; and, tranſported with joy, haſtened eagerly to meet him: but, on a ſudden, perceiving that he was blind—'Oh, Heaven!' exclaimed he; 'Oh, my 'good maſter; is it to behold you in 'this ſtate that poor Anſelmo has lived 'till your return!' Theſe words, interrupted by continued ſobbings, informed Beliſarius that it was his old faithful ſervant; who, proſtrate at his feet, was now embracing his knees. Beliſarius raiſed him; intreated him to moderate his grief; and requeſted him to lead the way to his wife and daughter.

Eudoxa, at ſight of her father, gave a ſingle ſhriek, and ſwooned away. Antonina, who, as has already been obſerved, ſuffered under a ſlow and conſuming fever, was inſtantaneouſly ſeized with the moſt violent frenzy: ſhe ſtarted from her couch with all the force of frantick rage; and, burſting from Tiberius and her nurſe, who vainly attempted to hold her, endeavoured to daſh herſelf againſt the floor. Eudoxa, re-animated by the ſhrieks of her mother, ran and caught her in her arms. 'My mother! O my 'dear mother!' ſaid ſhe, 'have pity on 'me.'—'Let me die!' cried the diſtracted mother: 'if I live, it ſhall only 'be for revenge, that I may go and 'tear in pieces their hearts. The monſters! Behold his recompence! But 'for him, twenty times would they have 'been buried in the aſhes of their own 'palaces. This is his crime! He has 'prolonged their odious tyranny! It 'is for that he ſuffers; it is for that he 'has atoned to the people. What barbarity! what horrible baſeneſs! the 'prop of their ſtate! their deliverer! 'Execrable court! aſſembly of tigers! 'O ye gods! is it thus that ye manifeſt your juſtice? Behold who you ſuffer to be oppreſſed; behold who you 'permit to proſper!'

Antonina, in her diſtraction, ſometimes tore her hair, and ſometimes wounded her face: ſometimes, opening her trembling arms, ſhe flew to her huſband, and almoſt drowned him with her tears; and ſometimes, ruſhing violently towards her daughter—'Die!' exclaimed ſhe; 'there is in this life ſuc'ceſs only for the wicked, for the vir'tuous nothing but miſery.'

From this violence, ſhe fell into a fatal melancholy; and the powerful exertions of ſtruggling Nature having totally exhauſted her ſtrength, in a few hours ſhe expired.

A vene-

A venerable old man blind; his wife dead before him; a daughter in the laſt deſpair, weeping, ſhrieking, and lamenting, around him; and, to compleat his wretchedneſs, abandoned to ſolitude and indigence. Such was the ſtate in which Fortune preſented to the eyes of Tiberius a family for thirty years baſking in glory and proſperity. 'Alas!' ſaid Tiberius, recollecting the words of the philoſopher, 'behold, then, the ſpecta-'cle which Heaven views with compla-'cency! a great man ſtruggling with 'Adverſity, and vanquiſhing her by his 'fortitude!'

Beliſarius permitted the grief of his daughter to have a free courſe; and, for his own part, abandoned himſelf to the exceſs of affliction: but, after paying to Nature the tribute of a ſuſceptible mind, he roſe from the burden of his woes with all the ſtrength and dignity of a hero.

Eudoxa ſtifled her ſobbings, from the dread of renewing the grief of her father: but, as the old man embraced his daughter, he felt himſelf bathed with her tears. 'You afflict yourſelf, my child, 'with what ought to fortify us, and 'raiſe us above deſpair. Your mo-'ther, after expiating the errors of her 'life, enjoys eternal reſt; and ſhe now 'weeps with pity for us, who are ob-'liged to ſurvive her. That cold and 'tranquil ſtate in which her body lies, 'is an emblem of the peace which her 'ſoul enjoys. See, then, how vain are 'all the calamities of life; a breath of 'wind comes, and they vaniſh! The 'court and empire have faded from 'your mother's eyes; and, now in the 'boſom of her God, the whole world 'appears to her only as a ſmall ſpeck in 'the immenſity of ſpace. Theſe are the 'reflections which adminiſter conſola-'tion and fortitude to the wiſe in the 'hour of adverſity.'—'Oh! give me 'that fortitude, then,' ſaid Eudoxa, 'which nature has refuſed me, that I 'may be enabled to bear ſuch a com-'plication of miſery. I could have 'ſupported any ſufferings of my own; 'but, to ſee a beloved mother expire 'with grief in my arms! to ſee you, my 'father, in the horrible ſtate to which 'the cruelty of your enemies has reduc-'ed you——' 'Alas! my daughter,' interrupted the hero, 'in depriving me 'of my eyes, they only did that which 'age or death was about to do; and as 'to fortune, you would have been but 'ill qualified to have enjoyed affluence, if 'you know not how to relinquiſh it with 'indifference.'—'Oh! witneſs for me, 'Heaven,' cried ſhe, 'that it is not the 'loſs of fortune that diſtreſſes me!'—'Then let nothing elſe afflict you, my 'child!' replied her venerable father. And with his hand he wiped away her tears.

Beliſarius being informed that a young ſtranger waited to ſpeak with him, deſired he might be introduced, and then aſked him his pleaſure. 'This 'is not a time,' replied Tiberius, 'to 'offer you conſolation. Illuſtrious and 'unfortunate man, I venerate your 'misfortunes; I participate them; and 'I intreat of Heaven that I may be en-'abled to ſoften their rigour: till that 'opportunity offers, I can only blend 'my tears with your own.'

The hour ſoon arrived when it was neceſſary to perform the funeral obſequies of Antonina; and Beliſarius, leaning on his daughter, followed the remains of his wife to their tomb. His grief was that of a philoſopher; profound, but ſilent, and ſuſtained with dignity. Melancholy was depicted on his face, but it was a grave and decent melancholy. His mien was erect; not as defying fate, but ſeemingly reſigned to it's ſtroke.

Tiberius, too, aſſiſted at the mournful ceremony. He witneſſed the affecting regrets of Eudoxa to the memory of her mother, and became more deeply enamoured.

In a ſhort time, Beliſarius addreſſed him thus. 'Brave youth, I perceive 'that it is you who was ſo ſolicitous 'to procure me accommodations on my 'road: inform me, then, who you are; 'and let me know to what motive 'I may aſcribe the generous inter-'ference?'—'My name is Tiberius,' replied the youth, 'I ſerved under Nar-'ſes, in Italy, and have ſince borne 'arms in the wars of Colchis. I am 'one of the hunting-party to whom you 'applied for ſhelter, and whoſe impru-'dence you ſo well reprehended. I 'have ever ſince been uneaſy till I could 'come to ſolicit your forgiveneſs, with 'the addition of a ſtill dearer favour. I 'am rich: this may be an evil; but, it is 'in your power to convert it to a bleſſing. 'I have a ſeat in this neighbourhood;

'and

'and it will be my ambition to conſe-
'crate it as the aſylum of an hero. It
'will be preſuming on a ſlender title, to
'urge the reſpect and veneration I en-
'tertain for your character: every lover
'of his country muſt feel the diſgrace of
'Beliſarius, and wiſh not only to ſhare
'but to mitigate his calamities. I feel,
'however, an impulſe worthy to touch
'you nearer; it is that of a young man
'ambitious of being admitted to the in-
'timacy of ſo illuſtrious an hero; and
'to imbibe from his mind, as from a
'pure ſpring, wiſdom, honour, and
'virtue.'

'You flatter my old age,' replied Beliſarius; 'but I diſcover a gene-
'rous and a noble mind, that feels for
'my misfortunes. At preſent, I wiſh
'to remain in ſolitude: the agitation
'of my ſpirits muſt be calmed by ſilent
'meditation. Hereafter I will accept, as
'part of what you propoſe, the pleaſure
'of living good neighbours, and con-
'verſing together. I have a regard for
'youth: the ſoul, in that happy ſeaſon
'of life, is ſuſceptible of the nobleſt im-
'preſſions; the ſublimity of virtue in-
'flames it with a laudable enthuſiaſm;
'and the paſſions have not yet entang-
'led it in their ſnares. Viſit me often;
'I ſhall always be happy to converſe
'with you.'

'If you think me worthy of ſo much,' replied Tiberius, 'why may I not poſ-
'ſeſs you wholly? My anceſtors will be
'honoured, by having their inheritance
'become your property, and their dwel-
'ling your ſanctuary. You ſhall be
'reverenced, and attended by my whole
'houſhold; who will learn, from my
'own example, to give you every mark
'of the ſincereſt reſpect and veneration.'

'Young man,' replied Beliſarius, 'you are too good; but we muſt do no-
'thing raſhly. Tell me, for it is now ten
'years that I have been ſequeſtered from
'the world, what is your father's ſta-
'tion; and what are his views for you?'
—'We are deſcended,' replied Tiberius, 'from one of thoſe families which
'Conſtantine tranſplanted from Rome,
'and diſtinguiſhed with his higheſt fa-
'vours. In the reign of Juſtin, my
'father acquired no ſmall ſhare of mi-
'litary glory, and was eſteemed and
'cheriſhed by the emperor. In the
'ſucceeding reign, preferences were
'given to others, which he conſidered as
'unjuſt, and retired in diſcontent. He
'has ſince repented; and has now that
'ambition for me, of which he poſſeſ-
'ſed too little for himſelf.'—'You have
'ſaid enough,' ſaid Beliſarius; 'I will
'never be any obſtacle to the advance-
'ment of his ſon. In following the
'dictates of your heart, you felt only
'the pleaſure of being generous; and,
'indeed, it is a ſweet ſenſation. But
'I foreſee the danger of involving your-
'ſelf in the ruin of a man proſcribed.
'Whether, my good young friend, a
'court be right or wrong, it never re-
'tracts. It may forget a real criminal
'it has puniſhed: but it never fails to
'purſue, with unrelenting hatred, the
'innocent man it has once injured; for
'the very mention of his name is a ſa-
'tire on his perſecutors, and his exiſt-
'ence is a continual remembrancer to
'their conſciences.'

'I will engage,' ſays Tiberius, 'to
'juſtify my conduct. The emperor
'has erred, but he will be open to con-
'viction.'

'If you mean this on my account,' ſays Beliſarius, 'loſe not a thought
'that way. The miſchief is done; and
'may the emperor forget it, for the
'peace of his future days!'

'This is noble!' replied Tiberius; 'but let me urge you to be ſtill more
'generous. Spare Juſtinian the eter-
'nal reproach of having left you to lan-
'guiſh in miſery. The vile ſtate in
'which I find you, is a ſight ſhocking
'to humanity, diſgraceful to the
'throne, the horror of every honeſt
'mind, and the terror of ſimilar vir-
'tue.'

'The virtue,' replied Beliſarius, 'that will be thus diſcouraged, cannot
'be like mine. For the reſt, I think,
'with you, that my condition may
'awaken the mingled paſſions of pity
'and indignation. A poor blind man
'can excite no envy, and may inſpire
'compaſſion. It is for this reaſon, that
'I am reſolved to live in obſcurity;
'and, though I diſcovered myſelf to
'your friends, it was in an unguarded
'moment, when my patience was
'exhauſted by the thoughtleſs young
'man who made me commit that raſh
'blunder. It will be the laſt indiſ-
'cretion of my life, and this retreat ſhall
'be my grave. Adieu! The emperor
'may, perhaps, not know that the Bul-
'garians have entered Thrace; neglect
'not to prepare him againſt them!'

Tiberius

Tiberius withdrew, not a little diſappointed at his ill ſucceſs; and he related to the emperor what Beliſarius had told him. Juſtinian accordingly put his troops immediately in motion; and, in a few days, he received intelligence that the Bulgarians had been totally diſperſed. 'Now, then,' ſaid he to Tiberius, 'we 'are at leiſure to viſit this unfortunate 'old man. I will appear as your fa'ther; and you muſt be careful to ſay 'nothing that may undeceive him.' A country-ſeat, about half way to the retreat of Beliſarius, was the place from whence the emperor, concealing himſelf from his courtiers, went the next day to ſee his old general.

CHAP. VII.

'IS it here, then, that he reſides, who 'has ſo often rendered me the 'victor!' exclaimed Juſtinian, as he paſſed under an old ruinous portico. Beliſarius, on their entrance, roſe to receive them. The emperor, at ſight of the venerable old man in the condition to which he had reduced him, was penetrated with ſhame and remorſe. An exclamation of grief forced it's way; and, leaning on Tiberius, he covered his eyes with his hands, as if unworthy to behold that light which Beliſarius could no longer perceive. 'What mean 'thoſe expreſſions of grief?' enquired the venerable man. 'I have brought my 'father,' replied Tiberius, 'and his 'ſenſibility is affected by your diſtreſs.' —'Where is he?' returned the old general, ſtretching out his hands. 'Let him 'come near me, that I may embrace 'him, for he has a virtuous ſon.' Juſtinian could not refuſe the embraces of Beliſarius; and, as he felt him preſſed to his boſom, his emotions were ſo powerful, that he was unable to ſuppreſs either his tears or his groans. 'Mo'derate,' ſaid the hero, 'this exceſs of 'compaſſion: I am not, perhaps, ſo 'wretched as you may imagine. Let 'us talk about yourſelf, and this young 'man who will be a comfort to your 'old age.'—'Yes,' replied the emperor, ſtopping at every word, 'yes—if 'you will permit him to come and hear 'the leſſons of experience from your 'lips.'—'Alas! what can I teach him,' ſaid Beliſarius, 'that a wiſe and good 'father has not already anticipated?' —'You may inſtruct him,' ſaid the emperor, 'in what I, perhaps, know too 'little. The court is the place where 'he muſt paſs his days; and, for a long 'time, I have had ſo little communica'tion with mankind, that the world is 'as new to me as it is to him. But 'you, who have ſeen things in all their 'various aſpects, what ſervices may you 'not render him!'—'If he wants to 'give ſtability to Fortune,' ſaid Beliſarius, 'I am, as you perceive, but ill 'qualified to inſtruct him: but, would 'he learn to be an honeſt man, at the 'hazard of all that is dear, I think 'I can render him ſervice. He is born 'with advantages, and that is a mate'rial circumſtance.'—'Very true,' ſaid Juſtinian; 'he is deſcended from a race 'of noble anceſtors.'—'That was not 'what I meant; however, even that is 'an advantage, provided it be not abuſ'ed.—Have you ever, young man,' continued Beliſarius, 'conſidered what 'nobility is? It is a letter of credence 'given to you by your country, on the 'ſecurity of your anceſtors, in full con'fidence that you will acquit yourſelf 'with honour to thoſe who ſtand en'gaged for you.'—'But that credit,' ſays the emperor, 'is often very ha'zardous.'—'No matter,' reſumed Beliſarius; 'it is ſtill a moſt excellent 'inſtitution. I figure to myſelf a child 'of noble deſcent coming into the 'world, naked, weak, indigent, and 'helpleſs, like the offspring of a com'mon labourer. I then imagine to 'myſelf his country receiving him thus: "Welcome, my child! welcome to my "arms! You will hereafter be devoted "to my ſervice, valiant, intrepid, ge"nerous, and heroick, like your an"ceſtors. They have tranſmitted to "you their example, I confer on you "their titles and their honours; double "reaſons for you to emulate their vir"tues." Will you not admit,' continued Beliſarius, 'that, among the moſt 'ſolemn ceremonies, there is nothing 'more truly great and ſublime?'—'This 'is too much,' ſaid Juſtinian.'—'When 'we would elevate young minds,' replied Beliſarius, 'we muſt ſtrike them 'by grandeur and ſublimity: and do 'you not perceive that there is true 'œconomy in thus liberally beſtowing 'ſplendid honours? Suppoſe, on a fair 'eſtimate, that theſe incentives produce 'only two or three great men in a cen-

'tury,

'tury, the ſtate has no reaſon to com-
'plain; it is, indeed, ample compenſa-
'tion.—My young friend,' ſaid he, addreſſing himſelf to Tiberius, 'you 'muſt be one of thoſe who are thus to 'recompenſe their country.' Then continuing his diſcourſe to the emperor—'You have allowed me,' ſays he, 'to 'ſpeak to him as a father?'—'Do 'ſo, I intreat you,' replied Juſtinian. 'Well, then, my ſon, you muſt be-'gin by perſuading yourſelf that no-'bility is like a flame, which continues 'to blaze while it can communicate it's 'ardour, but ſoon dies away when the 'materials which feed and ſuſtain it are 'exhauſted. Be mindful, therefore, 'of your birth, for it impoſes duties on 'you; remember your anceſtors, for 'they are your examples: but conſider, 'that the glory they have tranſmitted 'you is not an inheritance on which 'you are to ſubſiſt in indolence; and, 'above all things, eradicate from your 'heart that ſupercilious pride, which 'ſwells with the importance of a fami-'ly name, and beholds with the timo-'rous eye of ſcorn and jealouſy every 'preference obtained by honeſt merit. 'As Ambition has an aſſumed air of 'nobility, ſhe eaſily glides into the 'heart of a man of family; but this 'paſſion, when carried to exceſs, de-'generates into meanneſs, like any 'more ignoble propenſity. It ſwells 'with ſelf-importance, becauſe it af-'fects to be ſuperior to all the duties 'of an honeſt man. If you wiſh to 'know what it truly is, take notice of a 'bird of prey, hovering over a field in 'the morning; and, among a thouſand 'trembling little animals, marking out, 'with a piercing eye, that which he ſe-'lects for the gratification of his vora-'cious appetite: it is thus that Ambition 'awakes to deliberate what virtue ſhall 'become it's victim. Alas! my friend, 'attachment to ſelf, that natural pro-'penſity of the heart, is deteſtable in a 'publick character, whenever it be-'comes a ruling paſſion. I have ſeen 'men who, for their own advancement, 'would not heſitate to riſk the ſafety of 'an army, or even the deſtruction of an 'empire. Envious at the ſucceſs of 'others, whom they have not merit to 'emulate, they are alarmed with the 'dread of never riſing to the honour of 'a brilliant atchievement; and, were 'they unreſtrained by fear, they would 'make every enterprize miſcarry, where 'they have not the ſupreme command. 'The publick good is to them a cala-'mity, unleſs it be aſcribed to their 'own abilities. This is the ſpecies of 'men, whether in the cabinet or in the 'field, the moſt pernicious to ſociety. 'The man of true honour does his 'duty without caring for popular ap-'plauſe: God, and his own con-'ſcience are the witneſſes of his actions, 'and to them he with confidence ap-'peals. A generous openneſs of heart, 'a calm deliberate courage, and a 'prompt zeal for the publick ſervice, 'are the characteriſticks of true great-'neſs of mind; envy, vanity, and pride, 'are all marks of baſeneſs and puſilla-'nimity. It is but little that you 'make no claim to the praiſe which you 'have not merited; you muſt even know 'how to relinquiſh the fame you have 'actually deſerved. You muſt con-'ſider that the ſovereign is liable to be 'miſtaken, for he is but a man; and 'that it is very poſſible that your coun-'try, and the age in which you live, 'may form as ill a judgment of you as 'himſelf, and even that after-times may 'not be more juſt. You muſt, there-'fore, conſult your own heart; and thus 'queſtion yourſelf—"Were I reduced "to the condition of Beliſarius, could "I conſole myſelf by my innocence, "and the conſciouſneſs of having done "my duty?" If you want reſolution 'to give an inſtant and a ſteady deci-'ſion, paſs your days in obſcurity; for 'you poſſeſs not the requiſites to ſuſtain 'a great publick character.'

'Alas! that is too much to expect 'from man!' replied Juſtinian, with a deep ſigh; 'and your example is dread-'ful.'—'It is dreadful at the firſt 'glance,' ſaid Beliſarius; 'but much 'leſs ſo after a little reflection. For, in 'fact, ſuppoſe either war, diſeaſe, or 'old age, had taken away my ſight, 'it would have been a very natural ac-'cident, and not in the leaſt aſtoniſhed 'you. And what are the vices of hu-'man nature? Are they not as much 'in the ordinary courſe of things as 'the plague which has deſolated the empire? Can it matter what inſtru-ment Nature employs in our deſtruc-

'tion? The anger of a prince, the arrow 'of an enemy, or a grain of ſand, are 'equally fatal*. When we begin to 'act on the ſtage of the world, we muſt 'expect the changes of the ſcene. 'You, who have deſtined your ſon to a 'martial life, have you not foreſeen, 'for him, thouſands of perilous events? 'Add to them the machinations of en-'vy, the ſnares of treachery, the frauds 'of diſſimulation, and the ſecret ſtabs 'of calumny; and, if your ſon lives to 'my age without being wounded by 'either of them, you muſt allow that 'he will be very fortunate. In life, 'every evil is compenſated. You ſee 'me only as blind, and poor, and in a 'ruinous habitation: but call to your 'remembrance thirty years of glory and 'proſperity, and you will wiſh for your 'ſon the fate of Beliſarius. Come, my 'good neighbour; we muſt have a lit-'tle fortitude: you feel the ſolicitude of 'a father; but I ſtill flatter myſelf your 'ſon does me the honour to envy me.' —'Moſt aſſuredly!' exclaimed Tibe-rius. 'But it is much leſs your pro-'ſperity,' ſaid the emperor, 'that he 'ought to envy, than the courage with 'which you ſuſtain all the aſſaults of 'adverſity.'—'Courage is indiſpenſa-'ble,' replied Beliſarius; 'but not 'merely that courage which can look 'death in the face: that is the bravery 'of a common ſoldier. The courage 'of a general conſiſts in riſing ſuperior 'to all misfortunes. Would you know 'who is, in my eſtimation, the man of 'the greateſt courage? He who perſiſts 'in his duty, at the riſque, and even at 'the expence, of his glory. The wiſe 'and magnanimous Fabius, for exam-'ple, who knew with what ſcorn his 'delay was ſpoken of, yet altered not 'his conduct; unlike the vain, and ir-'reſolute Pompey, who choſe rather to 'hazard the fate of Rome, and of the 'whole world, than endure a joke. In 'one of my firſt campaigns againſt the 'Perſians, the ill advice of ſome raſh 'officers in my army prevailed on me to 'engage, when I neither ought, nor was 'inclined, to have riſqued an action. I 'loſt the battle. I never can forgive 'myſelf. He who ſuffers his con-duct to depend on the opinion of 'others, can never rely on himſelf. 'What would be the conſequence, if, 'in order to prevail on ourſelves to act 'like men of honour, it were neceſſary 'to wait for an impartial age, and a 'prince not liable to error? Proceed, 'then, with firmneſs. Perhaps, when 'you reach the goal, Calumny and In-'gratitude will be there: but Glory 'may alſo be preſent; and, if ſhe be not, 'Virtue will do very well. Have no 'other fear, than that of wanting her: 'in the loweſt abyſs of miſery and hu-'miliation, ſhe will accompany you. 'Oh! my friend, if you knew but how 'far more exquiſite is a ſingle ſmile of 'Virtue than all the careſſes of For-'tune!'

'You penetrate my ſoul!' ſaid Juſ-tinian, in a tender tone of embarraſſ-ment. 'How happy is my ſon, to im-'bibe, in time, theſe noble ſentiments! 'Ah! why is this ſchool not the 'ſchool of ſovereigns!'—'Let us ſay 'nothing about ſovereigns,' replied Beliſarius; 'they are more to be 'pitied than ourſelves.'—'They are to 'be pitied,' ſaid Juſtinian, 'becauſe 'they have no friends, or ſuch alone as 'are not ſufficiently bold and enlight-'ened to ſerve them as guides. My 'ſon is born to live at courts: he may, 'in time, be admitted to the councils, 'or perhaps the intimacy of his prince, 'and thus render theſe your leſſons 'conducive to the good of mankind. 'Diſdain not to enlarge his mind, by 'elevating it to a knowledge of the ſub-'lime art of governing. Inſtruct him, 'then, as you think the friend of a ſo-'vereign ought to be inſtructed. Juſ-'tinian is haſtening to his tomb; but his 'ſucceſſor, more happy than himſelf, 'may perhaps have the pupil of Beli-'ſarius for his friend.'—'Alas!' ſaid the old general, 'would it were in my 'power, once more, before I die, to be 'ſerviceable to my country! But the 'fruits of my experience and reflection 'will be conſidered as the reveries of a 'viſionary old man. And really, in 'theory, nothing is more eaſy than to 'arrange a ſyſtem: difficulties ſoon va-niſh. The circumſtances owe their 'birth to the projector, and he marſhals 'them as he pleaſes. He makes what-

* Democritum pediculi; Socratem aliud pediculorum genus, nequiſſimi bipedes interemerunt. Quorſum hæc? Ingreſſus es vitam; navigâſti; vectus es; diſcede. *M. Antoninus Imper. De ſe ipſo*, lib. iii.

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'ever uſe he thinks proper both of men 'and things: he ſuppoſes himſelf free 'from paſſions and weakneſſes; always 'enlightened, always wiſe, and equal-'ly bleſſed with firmneſs and modera-'tion. A ſweet but deceitful illuſion, 'which experience ſoon deſtroys, if the 'reins of government are once reſign-'ed to his hands.'—'This illuſion it-'ſelf is uſeful,' ſaid the young man; 'for even the chimerical idea of a per-'fect ſyſtem may become the model of 'one that is reſpectable!'—'I wiſh it 'may,' replied Beliſarius; 'though I 'am not ſanguine enough to hope ſo. 'The worſt poſſible inſtitutions find 'every where zealots who feel an inte-'reſt in ſupporting them.'—'I will 'promiſe you,' ſaid Juſtinian, 'that 'the fruits of your wiſdom ſhall not be 'thrown away, if you will confide in 'the zeal of my ſon.'—'You deſerve,' replied the hero, 'that I ſhould be open 'and ingenuous with you. I exact, 'however, your ſolemn promiſe, not to 'divulge, during the preſent reign, a 'ſingle word of what I ſhall confide to 'you.'—'Why?' ſaid Juſtinian. 'Be-'cauſe I am unwilling to afflict with my 'melancholy reflections,' replied Beli-ſarius, 'an aged ſovereign, who feels 'but too ſenſibly the evils which he 'cannot repair.'

Such was their firſt interview.

'What a diſgrace is it for me,' ſaid Juſtinian, as they rode along, 'to have 'ſo ill known ſuch a man! My dear 'Tiberius, you ſee how we are deceiv-'ed! how we become tyrants, in ſpite 'of ourſelves!'

All night, and the day following, he was haunted by the image of Beliſarius; and, towards the evening, at the ſame hour as before, he returned to renew his grief.

CHAP. VIII.

BELISARIUS was walking, with his guide, a little way on the road. As ſoon as the emperor perceived him, he alighted from his chariot; and, familiarly accoſting him—'You find us,' ſaid he, 'deeply plunged in ſerious re-'flections. Shocked at the injuſtice 'which the aged emperor who con-'demned you has been induced to com-'mit, I was meditating, with my 'ſon, on the dangers that await royal-'ty: and I could not avoid ſaying, that 'I thought it very wonderful, how a 'whole free people could ever agree to 'reſign their liberty into the hands of 'a ſingle man: a man, weak and frail, 'like themſelves; eaſily to be deluded, 'liable to be miſtaken, and in whom the 'errors of a moment might be attended 'with ſuch fatal conſequences!'—'And 'do you imagine,' ſays Beliſarius, 'that a ſenate, or an aſſembly of the 'people, would be more juſt and infalli-'ble? Was it under a monarchy that 'Camillus, Themiſtocles, and Ari-'ſtides, were proſcribed? To multiply 'the members of government is to 'multiply it's vices, for each individual 'contributes his own. It is not, there-'fore, without reaſon, that the moſt 'ſimple form of government is prefer-'red; and whether ſtates have been 'formed by conqueſt, or original com-'pact; whether they have confided in 'the goodneſs of their laws, or the pow-'er of their arms; it is natural that the 'man who was found to poſſeſs the 'moſt wiſdom, the moſt valour, and 'the moſt ability, ſhould obtain their 'confidence, and receive homage from 'the majority. What aſtoniſhes me, 'is not that an aſſembled people ſhould 'willingly confide to ſuch an indivi-'dual the government of the whole; but 'that any ſuch individual could be found 'willing to take upon himſelf the diſ-'charge of ſo painful a duty.'—'This,' ſaid Tiberius, 'is to me incomprehen-'ſible.'—'To underſtand it, then,' re-plied Beliſarius, 'conceive yourſelf in 'the ſituation of the people, and of the 'prince, at that firſt election.

"What is our riſk?" the people may 'be ſuppoſed to ſay; "what do we ha-"zard in thus giving ſupreme power to "a king? It is his happineſs we thus "make dependent on our own; the "ſtrength of the community becomes "his ſtrength; and his glory is connected "with our proſperity: as a ſovereign, "he can only exiſt with us, and by us. "It is, therefore, only neceſſary that he "ſhould truly love himſelf, to ſecure his "love of us; and he will find it his in-"tereſt to be juſt and beneficent." This 'has been their political creed.'—'They have not conſidered, however,' ſaid Juſtinian, 'the paſſions and the er-'rors that aſſail the mind of a prince.'—'They have,' replied Beliſarius, 'only 'conſidered the inſeparable union of in-

'tereſts between the prince and his people: they have conceived it a thing impoſſible, that one ever could become violently, and in cool blood, the enemy of the other. Deſpotiſm appeared to them a ſpecies of ſuicide, that could only proceed from inſanity; and, if the prince were ſeized with this dangerous malady, they fortified themſelves, by the wiſdom of their laws, againſt the wild and frantick paſſions of a man grown the enemy of himſelf. They foreſaw, indeed, that they ſhould have reaſon to fear many men who would feel it their intereſt to be baſe; but they doubted not that ſuch a confederacy, always a ſmall minority, would be unable to cope with the multitude of thoſe to whom virtue muſt be moſt advantageous, and who would always have the king at their head. Indeed, till ſad experience opened the eyes of men, who could foreſee that monarchs would ever ſink to ſuch a degree of infatuation, as to divorce themſelves from their people, and join with their avowed enemies? This is ſo inconceivable a rebellion againſt nature and common ſenſe, that it was neceſſary for it to be ſeen, before it could be believed. I am inclined to think, that the ſimplicity of ancient manners never expected ſo ſhocking a revolution.

'But if any one ought to have been alarmed at the primary election of a ſingle man to reign over the whole, it muſt be him on whom the ſupreme authority devolved. If the father of a family, who has five or ſix children to bring up, to eſtabliſh, and render happy in their ſtations, finds it ſo difficult to ſleep without anxiety, what muſt be the care and concern of him whoſe family is computed by millions?

"I am engaged," he muſt have reaſoned with himſelf, "to live only for "my people; I ſacrifice my own eaſe to "their happineſs. By a ſolemn oath "I ſtand engaged to rule over them by "uſeful and equitable laws; and to "have no will of my own which is not "conformable to the ſpirit of thoſe "laws. The more powerful they make "me, the leſs am I left at liberty: the "more they confide to me, the more "am I attached to them. To them "am I accountable for the frailties of "my nature, my paſſions, and my er"rors; I give them a ſort of juriſdiction "over me. In ſhort, I relinquiſh my"ſelf, by conſenting to reign; and "the man is, as it were, annihilated, that "the king may poſſeſs his entire ſoul."

'Can there be a ſacrifice more generous, more abſolute! Theſe were the ſentiments of an Antoninus, of a Marcus Aurelius. "*I have no longer any "thing of my own,*" ſaid one of them. "*Even my palace does not belong to me,*" ſaid the other: and thoſe monarchs who equal them think as they did.

'The vanity of the vulgar ſees only in royalty the vain pomp which pleaſes them, and excites the envy of their little minds: palaces, a court, homage, and all that ſplendor and magnificence which policy has attached to authority, that it might become more grand and aweful. Yet, amidſt all this brilliancy, there is for the moſt part contained a man overwhelmed with care, and waſting with inquietude: the victim of his duty, if he be zealous to perform it; the object of ſcorn if he neglects, and of deteſtation if he abandons it. Conſtantly reſtrained, and perpetually fluctuating betwixt good and evil; with devouring cares and painful vigils on one ſide, and on the other a liſtleſs apathy, and a diſreliſh for every bleſſing of life. Behold, then, what is the condition of a monarch! It has been truly obſerved, that endeavours are not wanting to make his pleaſures equal his pains; but his pains are innumerable, and his pleaſures are confined within the narrow circle of his wants. All the arts of luxury are not ſufficient to give him one new organ of ſenſation; and while enjoyments on every ſide court his attention, nature forbids their uſe, and the palled appetite rejects them. Thus, all the ſuperfluity with which he is ſurrounded, is to him of no value. His ſpacious palace is but an immenſe void, where he occupies an inconſiderable ſpot: beneath crimſon curtains and gilded canopies, he vainly endeavours to obtain that ſweet ſleep which the peaſant enjoys under his thatch; and, at his table, the monarch is cloyed, before the man has eaten to ſatiety.'

'I perceive,' ſaid Tiberius, 'that human nature is too weak to enjoy every thing, where every thing is to be had in abundance: but is it not agreeable to have the pleaſure of chuſing?'

'Alas! young man, young man!' exclaimed Beliſarius, 'you know not

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'what it is to be ſurfeited. That diſeaſe 'conſtitutes the moſt diſtreſſing languor 'that can befal the mind. Do you 'know the cauſe? The facility with 'which we can obtain every thing, 'makes us have no appetite for any 'thing. Either our deſires have not 'time to ripen into birth, or they are 'ſtifled in their birth by the exceſs of 'gratifications to the enjoyment of 'which their feeble powers are inade-'quate. Art has exhauſted herſelf in 'producing delicacies to reſtore a loſt 'appetite; but the ſenſibility of the ſoul 'is blunted; and, having no longer the 'incitement of want, ſhe knows not ei-'ther the allurements or the value of her 'gratifications. Woe to the man who 'can have every thing he wiſhes! That 'free enjoyment, which renders the de-'privation ſo inſupportable, reduces to 'inſipidity the ſweetneſs of every deli-'cacy, even while it is poſſeſſed.'

'You will, however, grant me,' replied Tiberius, 'that a prince has de-'licious and ſenſible enjoyments, to 'which diſguſt never ſucceeds?'—'For 'example,' ſays Beliſarius.'—'For ex-'ample, then, glory,' replied the young man. 'Of what kind?'—'Why, of all 'ſorts of glory; that of war in the firſt 'place.'—'Very well; you think, 'then, that victory is a delicious enjoy-'ment? Alas! when we leave on the 'duſt millions of ſlaughtered men, can 'you think the human mind ſuſceptible 'of pleaſure? I can forgive thoſe who, 'having encountered all the dangers of 'battle, rejoice that they have eſcaped 'with their lives; but, for a king born 'with ſenſibility, the day in which he 'ſheds torrents of human blood, and 'cauſes rivulets of tears to flow, can 'never be a day of delight. I have often 'walked over a field of battle: I would 'gladly have ſeen a Nero in my place; 'he muſt have wept. I know there are 'princes who enjoy the pleaſure of a 'campaign as they do that of the chace, 'and who expoſe their people as they 'let looſe their hounds: but the frenzy 'of conqueſt is a ſpecies of avarice, 'which is tormented by covetouſneſs, 'and is never ſatisfied. The province 'reduced, lies near another not yet in-'vaded*: in the neighbourhood of that 'is another, which ſtill Ambition burns 'to attack. Sooner or later comes a re-'verſe of fortune, which gives her 'more mortification than ſhe ever re-'ceived pleaſure from all her former 'victories: but, even ſuppoſing every 'ſtate ſubdued, you ſee the conqueror, 'like another Alexander, reach the ex-'tremity of the known world; and 'then, like him, returning a burden 'to himſelf and to mankind, not know-'ing what to do with the immenſe terri-'tory he has depopulated, a ſingle acre 'of which would be ſufficient to ſup-'port him, and two yards only to bury 'his remains. I ſaw, in my youth, the 'tomb of Cyrus: on a ſtone was this 'inſcription—"*I am Cyrus, he who* "*conquered the Perſian empire. Mor-*"*tal, whoever thou art, or from* "*whenceſoever thou comeſt, I intreat* "*thee not to envy me the little earth* "*which covers my poor aſhes*†." Alas!" 'ſaid I, turning away my eyes, "is it "worth while to be a conqueror!"

'Is it Beliſarius whom I hear?' cried Tiberius with aſtoniſhment. 'Beliſa-'rius knows better than any other man,' replied the hero, 'that War is the cruelleſt 'monſter which the pride of man has 'engendered.'—'There is, however,' returned Tiberius, 'a delectable enjoy-'ment, which a monarch need not fear 'to ſecure, and that is the ſupreme de-'light which he receives in exchange 'for the happineſs he gives his people.' —'Ay!' ſaid Beliſarius, 'if, on mount-'ing the throne, there were a certainty 'of eſtabliſhing the felicity of mankind, 'it would doubtleſs be a greater bleſ-'ſing than to hold the fate of empires 'in his hands, and I ſhould not be ſur-'prized that a generous mind devoted 'itſelf to that noble ambition; but aſk 'the auguſt old emperor who now reigns 'over you, if this is eaſily realized.'—'Is it impoſſible,' ſaid Juſtinian, 'to 'perſuade a people that he has done his 'beſt to make their burdens light, to 'mitigate their ſufferings, and to merit 'their love?'

'Some good princes,' ſaid Beliſarius, 'even during their lives, have 'obtained that glorious teſtimony, and 'it has afforded them their ſweeteſt con-'ſolation. But, unleſs ſome ſingular

* ——— ô ſi angulus iſte
Proximus accedat, qui nunc denormat agellum! HOR.
† Vide Plutarch's Life of Alexander.

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'event occurs to manifeſt clearly the 'love of his people, and convince him 'that he truly receives the ſacred homage 'of their hearts, what prince dare flat-'ter himſelf that their attachment is 'unanimous and ſincere? His courtiers 'vouch for it; but who vouches for his 'courtiers? While the ſong of revelry 'reſounds through his palace, who can 'aſſure him that, in the remoter parts 'of his dominions, the dome of the 'viceroy, and the cottage of the la-'bourer, do not echo with the groans of 'oppreſſed innocence? Publick feſti-'vals are nothing but dramas acted in 'his preſence, and the eulogies he hears 'are by command. He ſees before him 'the vileſt of human beings celebrated 'as deities; and, while a tyrant plunged 'in every vicious exceſs is imbibing the 'incenſe of adulation, the virtuous man, 'who ſpends his whole life on the 'throne, in ceaſeleſs efforts to do all the 'little good to the world that depends on 'him, paſſes to his grave without ever be-'ing certain that he had a ſingle ſincere 'friend. My heart bleeds, when I re-'flect that Juſtinian may deſcend to his 'tomb, perſuaded that I have been a 'traitor, and that I never loved him!'

'No!' cried the emperor, with impe-tuoſity: then, ſuddenly recollecting himſelf—'No!' ſaid he, with leſs ardour, 'a prince is not always ſo unfortunate, 'as not to know that he has been truly 'loved!'

'Very well,' replied Beliſarius, 'ad-'mit that he knows it; yet this bleſ-'ſing, which ſhould be ſo ſweet, is ſtill 'mixed with bitterneſs. The more a 'prince is beloved by his people, the 'more does their welfare become dear to 'him; conſequently, whatever good he 'does, or from whatever evil he 'protects them, the account appears to 'him, in the general maſs of good and 'evil, ſo inadequate to his wiſhes, that, 'when he arrives at the cloſe of a long 'life, he ſtill aſks himſelf—"*What have* "*I effected?*" Obliged inceſſantly to 'ſtruggle againſt the tide of adverſities, 'only conceive what he muſt ſuffer, who 'knows he can never ſtem the torrent, and 'feels himſelf hurried away by the cur-'rent of adverſe events! Aurelius de-'ſerved to ſee the world happy under 'his laws*, yet all the calamities, all the 'plagues of mankind, ſeemed to unite 'themſelves during his reign †. It ſeem-'ed as if all Nature had formed a general 'conſpiracy to render uſeleſs every effort 'of his wiſdom and virtue: yet he was 'the firſt monarch who raiſed a temple 'to *Beneficence*; he who, perhaps, of all 'monarchs, experienced the moſt miſe-'ry. But, without ſeeking ſuch remote 'examples, what reign has been more 'laborious, and apparently more ſuc-'ceſsful, than that of Juſtinian? Thirty 'years of war and victory in three 'quarters of the world; all the loſſes 'which the empire had ſuſtained during 'a century repaired by his ſucceſs; the 'people from the north to the weſt 'driven beyond the Danube and the 'Alps; tranquillity eſtabliſhed through-'out the provinces of Aſia; kings van-'quiſhed, and led in triumph; the de-'ſolation of a plague, the waſte of in-'vaſions, and the ruin of earthquakes, 'effaced almoſt from the memory of 'man by the beneficent hand of indefa-'tigable virtue; fortifications and tem-'ples innumerable, the firſt wholly 'erected, the laſt finiſhed with addi-'tional ſplendor. Imperial works! how 'glorious! how magnificent! Yet ſee, 'after all, in his old age, the enfeebled 'empire bends towards it's ruin, with-'out any power in his victorious hands 'to fix it on a ſolid foundation. Behold, 'then, the end of his labours, and 'all the fruit of his tedious vigils! 'Learn, then, my dear Tiberius, to pi-'ty the lot of ſovereigns; to judge of 'them with tenderneſs; and, above all, 'not to entertain the ſmalleſt animoſity 'againſt the auguſt and venerable man 'who governs us, on account of the 'evil which he has done, or the good 'which he may have left undone.'

'You ſhock me,' ſaid Tiberius; 'and the firſt advice I ſhould give any 'friend of mine on a throne, would be to 'abdicate it immediately!'—'To ab-'dicate it!' replied Beliſarius; 'no, 'my friend, you have too much courage 'to adviſe an act of cowardice. Have

* Iſte virtutum omnium, cœleſtiſque ingenii extitit, arumniſque publicis quaſi defenſor objectus eſt. *Aurel. Vict.*

† Ut prope nihil, quo ſummis angoribus atteri mortales ſolent, dici ſeu cogitari queat, quod non, illo imperante, ſævierit. *Ibid.*

'fatigues.

'fatigues or dangers ever induced you 'to throw down your arms? The ſword 'and the ſceptre are the ſame. The 'man of honour muſt ſuſtain with 'firmneſs his duty and his fate. Hide 'not from your friend, that he muſt in'evitably be the victim of his people: but 'tell him, at the ſame time, that this 'ſacrifice has it's charms; and that he 'may eaſily recompenſe himſelf, if he 'cheriſhes the enthuſiaſm of publick vir'tue, and confides, without reſerve, in 'that noble ſentiment, ſo as to expect on'ly from this ſource the indemnity and 'reward of his generous labours *.'— 'And where is this reward?' returned Tiberius. 'It is found,' ſaid Beliſarius, 'in the pure and internal ſenſations 'of goodneſs, in the pleaſure of being 'conſcious that we poſſeſs humanity, 'ſenſibility, and generoſity; and are, in 'ſhort, deſerving of the love of our fel'low-creatures, and not unworthy the 'care of Heaven. Can you ſuppoſe that 'a good king conſiders, when he riſes 'in a morning, what will be his ſalary 'for the day's labour? "Ariſe, thou," 'will he ſay to himſelf; "and let thy "riſing be that of juſtice and benevo"lence. Spurn the petty intereſts of thy "own care, and even of thy life: it is "not for thyſelf that thou liveſt. Thy "ſoul is that of a great nation; thy will "is but the wiſh of thy people, defined "and rendered ſacred by the law. "Reign, then, in conformity to the law; "and remember that it is thy buſineſs to "benefit the world †."—You are agi'tated, my dear Tiberius! I feel your 'hand tremble in mine! Aſſure your'ſelf, that virtue, even in affliction, 'poſſeſſes celeſtial enjoyments! It is 'true, that virtue cannot ſecure happi'neſs unalloyed by miſery; but is there 'any ſuch thing in the world? And, if 'there be, for the indolent, the wick'ed, and the worthleſs, is it reſerved? 'A good prince weeps over the ills 'which he cannot remedy; but do you 'imagine his tears are equally bitter 'with thoſe of envy, of ſhame, or re'morſe? No, they are ſuch tears as 'were ſhed by Titus, who wept that he 'had loſt a day; they are pure as their 'ſource. Say, then, to your friend, 'with the ſame authority as if a god 'ſpoke by your mouth; ſay to him, 'that if he be virtuous, to whatever 'miſerable condition fate may reduce 'him, he will never be reduced ſo low 'as to behold with an envious eye the 'moſt fortunate wicked man on earth. 'But that fortitude of mind, which is 'the ſupport of virtue, is not of ſpon'taneous growth: the mind of a young 'prince muſt be prepared for it's re'ception; and we will to-morrow ex'amine what are the requiſite prelimi'naries.'

'He does what he pleaſes with my 'heart,' ſaid Tiberius to Juſtinian; 'he elevates, depreſſes, and again raiſes 'it at his own diſcretion.'—'He rends 'mine in pieces!' replied the emperor. And theſe words, which eſcaped with a profound ſigh, were followed by a long ſilence. His court endeavoured, but in vain, to divert his melancholy; he was oppreſſed by their aſſiduities to diſpel his invincible gloom: and, on the morrow, having ſignified his intention to take a ſolitary walk, he retired into the neighbouring foreſt, where Tiberius waited his arrival. They proceeded together; and, having met the venerable hero, the young man did not fail to remind him of his promiſe, when Beliſarius thus proceeded.

CHAP. IX.

'IT has been doubted whether it be 'poſſible to love Virtue for herſelf 'alone. That is, perhaps, the ſub'lime inſtinct of ſome peculiarly fa'voured minds; but, whenever the 'love of virtue ſprings from reflection, 'it has it's ſource in ſelf-intereſt. Do 'not imagine that this maxim implies 'any thing debaſing to human nature. 'I am about to convince you, that the 'intereſt of virtue purifies and enno'bles itſelf, like that of friendſhip.

* Homo qui benefecit, ne plauſum quærat: ſed ad aliud negotium tranſeat quemadmodum vitis, ut ruſum ſuo tempore uvam producat. *Marc. Antonin.* lib. iii.

† Mane, cum gravatim à ſomno ſurgis, in promptu tibi ſit cogitare te ad humanum opus faciendum ſurgere. . . . Non ſentis quam multa poſſis præſtare, de quibus nulla eſt excuſatio naturæ ad ea non aptæ; et tamen adhuc, prudens ſcienſque, humi fixus hæres! *Ibid.* lib. v.

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'The example of one will illuſtrate the 'other.

'Friendſhip is, at firſt, only produced by views of convenience, of pleaſure, and utility. Inſenſibly, the effect becomes divided from the cauſe: the motives vaniſh; the ſentiment remains. A ſecret charm takes poſſeſſion of the mind; and habit renders it neceſſary to the enjoyment of life. From that period, pain is willingly embraced where pleaſure was expected; to Friendſhip is ſacrificed, without regret, all that happineſs which it was thought calculated to afford; and this ſentiment, conceived in joy, nouriſhes itſelf, and increaſes, in the midſt of calamities. It is the ſame with Virtue*. In order to attract the heart, it is neceſſary for her to appear with the allurement of pleaſure or utility: for, before we begin to love her, we love ourſelves; and, till we know how to enjoy the delights ſhe affords us, we expect gratifications very different from thoſe ſhe has to beſtow. When Regulus, in his youth, beheld her for the firſt time, he ſaw her triumphant, and crowned with glory. He fell in love with her; and you know whether he abandoned her when ſhe had nothing to give him but fetters, racks, and flames.

'Begin, then, by ſtudying what moſt captivates the mind of a young prince. He will probably wiſh to be free, powerful, and rich; obeyed by his ſubjects, univerſally beloved during life, and happy in the proſpect of immortal fame. Very good! Tell him, that it is on Virtue alone theſe advantages depend, and you will not deceive him.

'It is a ſecret hid from the greateſt monarchs, and which a prince ought always to know, that there is no power abſolute except that of the laws; and that he who would reign a deſpot, is in fact a ſlave. The law is an union of the ſentiments of the whole community†, delegated to one man: his power, therefore, is an aſſemblage of all the collected powers of the ſtate; whereas the will of a ſingle man, when it is unjuſt, has an union of the ſame force employed againſt him, which he muſt either divide, reſtrain, deſtroy, or combat. In this ſituation, tyrants have recourſe, ſometimes, to thoſe artifices which impoſe on the vulgar, aſtoniſh them, fill them with terror, and force them into ſubjection; and, at others, to their vile ſatellites, who ſell the blood of their countrymen, and march ſword in hand to ſtrike off every head which dares to raiſe itſelf from beneath the yoke and aſſert the rights of nature. Hence ariſe thoſe domeſtick wars, in which a brother ſays to a brother—"Die, or yield to the tyrant who has hired me to cut your throat." Proud to reign by force of arms, or by the terrifick illuſions of Superſtition, the heart of the tyrant rejoices in his ſucceſs: but how will it tremble, if he ceaſes for a ſingle moment to pamper the pride, or even dares to check the licentiouſneſs of his deteſtable aſſociates? Even while they ſerve him, they menace him; and the price of their obedience is an exemption from the puniſhment which is due to their crimes. Thus, to become the oppreſſor of one part of his ſubjects, he renders himſelf the ſlave of another; as mean and familiar with his accomplices, as haughty and inacceſſible to the reſt of his ſubjects. He is obliged to ſtudy the gratification of thoſe baſe paſſions which are to aſſiſt the promotion of his deſigns: for he knows perfectly well how deſperate and atrocious they are, ſince they have for him rent aſunder all the ties of nature and humanity. The tigers which ſportſmen train to the chace, devour their maſters if they neglect to give them part of the prey. Such is the compact of deſpots. In proportion, then, as authority verges towards deſpotiſm, it becomes enfeebled; and dependent on thoſe who ſupport it. Let the tyrant reflect on the reſpect, the deference, and the ſervile toleration, he is conſtrained to give his minions, to the utter ſubverſion of juſtice, and the neglect of

* Si quid in vitâ humanâ invenis potiùs juſtitiâ, veritate, temperantiâ, fortitudine. . . . . Ad ejus amplexum totis animi viribus contendas ſuadeo. *Marc. Antonin.* lib. iii.

† Communis ſponſio civitatis. *Pand.* lib. i. tit. 3.

'all

'all ſound policy; on the ridiculous 'privileges which he is obliged to grant 'them; and all that he muſt ſubmit to, 'diſſemble, and ſuffer, amidſt terrors 'and apprehenſions which never leave 'him.

'But, that the authority of a prince 'may be conformable to the laws, to 'the laws only muſt he ſubmit: they 'are founded on the combined wiſdom 'and power of the nation; and he has no 'other enemies than the wicked, thoſe 'common enemies of ſociety. Every 'man who is intereſted in the ſupport 'of order and publick tranquillity, is 'the natural defender of the authority 'by which he is protected; every virtu-'ous citizen, conſequently, conſiders 'the enemy of his prince as his own per-'ſonal enemy. He is, therefore, no 'longer ſituated between two ſeparate 'intereſts, both fighting againſt him; 'for the ſovereign, leagued with his 'people, is enriched and rendered pow-'erful by the wealth and ſtrength of the 'nation. It is thus that he becomes 'free; and that he is enabled to be juſt, 'without having any rivals to dread, or 'any political ſtratagems to encourage. 'His government being fixed on a ſo-'lid baſis at home, he commands and 'ſecures the reſpect of foreign powers; 'and, as neither ambition, pride, nor ca-'price, ever make him reſort to arms, he 'has the ſoldiers whom he carefully 'trains, in full vigour and conſtant rea-'dineſs to take the field whenever it be-'comes neceſſary to protect his people a-'gainſt either the domeſtick or natural 'enemies of the ſtate. Oh! my friend, if 'juſtice be the baſis of ſupreme power, 'the remuneration will be found in the 'grateful hearts of the people and their 'moſt vigorous exertions. The ſlave 'fights reluctantly for his priſon and his 'chains: but the citizen, who is at once 'free and happy, and who loves and is 'beloved by his prince, defends the 'ſceptre as his ſtaff, and the throne as 'his ſanctuary; and, while he marches 'to defend his country, he ſees, in every 'object around him, new incitements 'to all the ardour of military enthu-'ſiaſm.'

'Ah! leſſons like theſe,' ſaid Tibe-rius, 'impreſs the heart with irreſiſtible 'conviction. Why am I not deſtined to 'inſpire the breaſts of kings with a due 'ſenſe of their importance?'

'You muſt now be convinced,' re-plied Beliſarius, 'that their power is 'founded on juſtice; that it acquires 'force from being exerciſed with bene-'ficence; and that he is the moſt abſo-'lute monarch who reigns in the hearts 'of his people.'—'I plainly perceive,' ſaid Tiberius, 'that ſound policy and 'ſound reaſon are ſynonimous; and 'that the art of governing conſiſts in 'purſuing with firmneſs the ſuggeſ-'tions of an upright mind, and the 'dictates of a heart unpolluted by vice.' —'You are perfectly right,' returned Beliſarius; 'and no plan can be more 'eaſy of attainment, more pleaſing in 'the practice, and more certain in it's 'effects. The Emperor Juſtinian, 'though originally an honeſt peaſant of 'Illyria, ſoon found the means of en-'dearing his adminiſtration to mankind. 'Was he indebted for this diſtinguiſhed 'advantage to his ſkill in politicks? 'No; he owed it ſolely to the gifts of 'Nature, who had endowed him with a 'ſolid underſtanding, and a ſtrong diſ-'poſition to virtue. Were I a king, he 'ſhould be the object of my imitation. 'That ſpecies of crafty prudence 'which we too often ſee exerted by 'princes, has, indeed, the recommenda-'tion of frequent ſucceſs; but the road 'by which it traces the object of it's pur-'ſuit is rugged and dangerous, conti-'nually interrupted by rocks and pre-'cipices. How unlike the flowery 'path of a monarch who, deſpiſing all 'ſelfiſh conſiderations, devotes his 'whole time to the happineſs of his 'ſubjects; and who, by depending for 'his own ſafety on the acquiſition of 'their eſteem, is leſs expoſed to danger 'than the moſt wary, circumſpect, and 'ſuſpicious tyrant! But unfortunately 'the ſovereign is apt to be intimidated 'and alarmed by the artful inſinuations 'of deſigning ſycophants, who make 'him regard his people as an enemy to 'be dreaded; and that dread, once ex-'cited, realizes the danger they have 'taught him to apprehend, by produ-'cing miſtruſt, the certain forerunner 'of hatred.

'You have ſeen that a prince, inde-'pendent of his royalty, can have but 'few wants to ſatisfy; that he may ea-'ſily procure all the real enjoyments of 'life; and that, beyond the narrow cir-'cle to which he is confined, all is va-'nity, caprice, and illuſion. But, while 'Nature preſcribes moderation, he is

'forcibly impelled by every ſurrounding object to the unlimited gratification of factitious wants. Were it his aim to live in harmony with his people, he would have no party but his ſubjects, no intereſt but that of the ſtate; but, deceived by the inſidious wiles of intereſted courtiers, he is induced to view them with an eye of miſtruſt; all confidence is deſtroyed; the neceſſity of being ever prepared to repel the efforts of a diſcontented, turbulent, and ſeditious populace, is enforced; and the doctrine of reſiſtance ſtrongly inculcated in his mind. Thus urged, he takes up arms againſt his people; Ambition and Cupidity are the leaders of his party; and, in attempting to appeaſe their inſatiate appetites, he overleaps the boundaries of juſtice, and has recourſe to illegal exertions of the royal prerogative. Hence originates the ſhameful diviſion of intereſts we have witneſſed in the empire; that ſeparation of the provinces of the people from thoſe of the emperor; of the good of the ſubject from that of the monarch. The moment that a ſovereign is impreſſed with the idea that the ſecurity of his crown and the ſafety of his life depend on the extent of his property, he naturally becomes avaricious; thinks himſelf enriched by the impoveriſhment of his people; regards as clear gain all that his rapacity hath extorted; and even deems their penury a ſure pledge of their implicit obedience. Hence ſchemes of rapine and plunder on the one hand, diſcontent and murmurs on the other; and hence the latent ſeeds of civil wars, like a hidden flame, lie brooding in the very heart of the ſtate, and at length burſt forth in ſudden eruptions in every part of the kingdom. The ſovereign then experiences the want of thoſe ſuccours which he has procured by violence; he congratulates himſelf on his prudence; and ſees not that the adoption of juſt and equitable meaſures would have placed him far above ſuch timid precautions; and that all the groveling, mercenary paſſions, whoſe cruel ſervices he repays with the fruits of his rapacity, would be uſeleſs, if his actions were governed by virtue. Such, Tiberius, is the doctrine you ought to inſtil into the mind of a youthful prince. When a ſovereign is once perſuaded that the intereſts of the ſtate are the ſame with his own; that he derives his whole ſtrength from this political union; that it forms the baſis of his dignity, his honour, and his repoſe; he will reject all ideas of property, as unworthy a monarch*; and, by wiſely conſidering that the beſt advantage he can ſecure is the welfare of his ſubjects; he will be juſt from motives of intereſt, moderate from principles of ambition, and beneficent from the dictates of ſelf-love.

'This, my friends, is the ſenſe in which Truth ſhould be regarded as the parent of Virtue. I grant it requires no ſmall portion of courage to addreſs a ſovereign, for the firſt time, in the homely language of truth; and, when the ſervile voice of Adulation has taught him to believe that princes reign but for themſelves; that regal independence conſiſts in the unreſerved gratification of deſire; and that every ſuggeſtion of kingly caprice ſhould be received as an inviolable law; the honeſt and faithful counſellor who ventures to confute this notable ſyſtem, will not, at firſt, experience a very gracious reception. But, if he is once liſtened to, he will ſolely engroſs the royal attention: the firſt truth received, the reſt may follow in profuſion; they will be certain of an eaſy acceſs; and the prince, far from ſeeking to avoid, will anticipate the conſequence.

'Truth will have rendered Virtue dear to him; and Virtue, in her turn, will give additional attractions to the charms of Truth. For the diſpoſition to perform a good action, with the nature and effect of which we are wholly unacquainted, is a mere vague and confuſed inſtinct; and a deſire of becoming uſeful to our fellow-creatures is a deſire of obtaining the moſt beneficial knowledge. To know the true intereſts of humanity is, therefore, the only ſtudy that is worthy a prince. Whatever is juſt and uſeful ſhould form the object of his reſearches: that truth of which he ſhould be anxious to ac-

* The Emperor Trajan compared the treaſures of a prince to a ſwollen and diſordered ſpleen, which enfeebles the reſt of the body.

'quire

'quire a competent knowledge, is to be 'found in ſociety; in the wants of his 'ſubjects; in the neceſſity of reciprocal 'duties, the unity of intereſts, the mu-'tual interchange of friendly aſſiſt-'ance, and the moſt equitable diviſion 'of publick wealth among thoſe by 'whoſe labour it is produced. The due 'inveſtigation of theſe important ob-'jects ſhould form the ſole employment 'of a prince—an employment to which 'he ſhould devote every hour of his life. 'To know himſelf; to ſtudy man-'kind*; to trace the ſecret operations 'of the human heart; the force of 'habit; the ſpecifick qualities of charac-'ter; the influence of opinion; the 'peculiar ſtrength and failings of the 'mind and frame; to ſtudy intenſely, 'not with a frivolous curioſity, but 'with a fixed and ſteady determination 'of the will, with a perſeverance alarm-'ing to flatterers, the temper, the man-'ners, and the reſources of his people, 'together with the conduct of miniſters: 'and, the better to acquire a juſt know-'ledge of theſe important particulars, 'to receive information from all ſuch 'as are able and willing to impart 'it; but with the neceſſary diſcrimina-'tion, deteſting the dangerous malice 'of a ſecret informer, and affording the 'higheſt encouragement and protection 'to thoſe who have ſpirit openly to de-'mand a redreſs of grievances commit-'ted in his name—Theſe are the things 'which conſtitute a love of truth; and 'thus,' ſaid he, addreſſing himſelf to Ti-berius, 'will every prince demonſtrate 'his eſteem for it, who is convinced 'that, unleſs he be ſtrictly juſt, he can-'not be truly great. By impreſſing 'theſe ſentiments on his heart, you will 'inſtruct him how to be free and inde-'pendent even in the midſt of a court. 'When you have accompliſhed this 'part of your taſk, your next care will 'be to render him miſtruſtful of that li-'berty you have taught him to acquire, 'that he may be ſenſible of it's value, 'and averſe to abuſe it. This will be a 'work of difficulty, and will require the 'utmoſt exertion of your zeal and firm-'neſs.'—'It ſhall be done,' ſaid Ti-berius: 'you have only to ſupply me 'with the neceſſary inſtructions.' Here the converſation broke off, and they took leave of each other.

'It is ſtrange,' ſaid the emperor, 'that, in all ages and countries, the true 'friends of the people have been held in 'abhorrence by thoſe who are bound 'by their ſtation to be the fathers of 'the people. The popularity of Beli-'ſarius was his only crime; it was that 'alone excited the animoſity of my 'courtiers, and, perhaps, alarmed my 'own jealouſy. Alas! they rendered him 'the object of my fears, when I ought 'to have made him the object of my 'imitation!'

CHAP. X.

ABOUT the ſame hour, on the fol-lowing day, as Beliſarius was ſeat-ed, expecting his viſitors at the foot of an ancient oak by the road-ſide, the ſame ſpot where he had before received them, he could not forbear exclaiming—'It is a 'great comfort in my misfortunes to 'have found two virtuous men, who con-'ſcend to ſoothe my mind, by thus 'entering into a diſcuſſion of the 'great objects of humanity. How 'ſoothing to contemplate the ſocial in-'tereſts of man! It makes me forget my 'afflictions. The bare idea of being 'conducive, however remotely, to the 'welfare of mankind, has raiſed me 'above myſelf; and I can now conceive 'how the diffuſion of beneficence over 'a whole people aſſimilates man to his 'divine Creator.'

Juſtinian and Tiberius overheard theſe laſt words as they approached. 'You are warm in the praiſe of bene-'ficence,' ſaid the Emperor; 'and, in-'deed, I know not one virtue that is 'poſſeſſed of greater attractions. Hap-'py the man who can enjoy, without 'reſerve, the ſublime pleaſures it af-'fords!'—'And yet this ſupreme de-'light,' ſaid Beliſarius, 'muſt be taſt-'ed with moderation; for, if beneficence 'be not enlightened by wiſdom, and 'regulated by juſtice, it inſenſibly de-'generates into an oppoſite vice.—At-'tend, young man,' ſaid he, addreſſing himſelf to Tiberius—

* Quænam ſunt eorum mentes; quibus rebus ſtudent; quæ habent in honore; quæ amant. Cogita te nudas ipſorum mentes intueri. *Marc. Antonin. Lib.* ix.

'The moſt grateful exertion of ſovereign authority is the free diſtribution of favours; and the impulſe by which the ſovereign is urged to that exertion bears ſo ſtrong a reſemblance to benevolence, that the beſt of princes might be deceived, if he were not conſtantly guarded againſt ſeduction. He derives the whole of his intelligence from thoſe who are permitted to approach his perſon; and of that number there is not one who does not continually repeat to him, that the ſeat of majeſty is in the court; that his dignity conſiſts in the pomp that ſurrounds him; and that the moſt valuable prerogative of royalty is diſplayed by a profuſion of favours, which are ſtyled the Beneficence of the Sovereign.—Gracious Heaven! the Beneficence! It is the ſubſtance of the people he beſtows; the ſpoils of the indigent! This is the important truth that they ſtudiouſly conceal from him. His throne is beſieged by Adulation and Deceit. Won by aſſiduity, he inſenſibly contracts a habit of compliance; and no petition, however unworthy, is rejected. He ſees not the tears, he hears not the cries, of the poor, extorted by his thoughtleſs profuſion. Every apartment of his palace reſounds with acclamations of joy, and his ears are continually ſaluted with the benedictions of his rapacious courtiers. He accuſtoms himſelf to believe that this pretended beneficence is a real virtue; and perſiſts in ſquandering wealth, without reflecting on the ſource from whence it flows. Alas! did kings but know what numbers they involve in miſery for the mere gratification of an ungrateful crew!—But, Tiberius, the prince who has one true friend, will be ſure to know this: he will know likewiſe, that beneficence conſiſts leſs in profuſion than œconomy; that every partial gift is a flagrant injuſtice to merit; and that from prejudice and partiality ſpring the moſt ſerious calamities that can diſtract a ſtate.'

'You view the partiality of ſovereigns with an eye of ſeverity,' ſaid Tiberius. 'I conſider it in it's true light,' replied the hero, 'as a mere perſonal attachment, which, in the choice of miniſters, perverts the order of juſtice, of nature, and of reaſon. For Juſtice appropriates honours to virtue, and rewards to merit; Nature deſigns important offices for extraordinary talents; and Reaſon ſurely points out the neceſſity of employing all men to the greateſt advantage. But partiality confers the recompence due to virtue on elegant and poliſhed vice. Hence cringing complaiſance is preferred to honeſt zeal; adulation to truth; ſervile meanneſs to a noble elevation of ſoul: and, as if the ſuperficial gift of pleaſing were ſuperior to every other endowment, it aſpires to the higheſt favours of the crown, and generally is ſuffered to obtain them. From theſe premiſes reſult a natural conſequence, that partiality in the diſtribution of honours and rewards is the certain mark of a bad reign; and the prince who reſigns into the hands of a favourite the glory of his crown, and the welfare of his people, muſt either be ſuſpected of ſetting a ſmall value on what he confides to him, or of aſcribing to his own choice the miraculous power of transforming the human mind, and of converting a ſuperannuated ſlave, or a youthful profligate, into a ſage or a hero.'

'Such an attempt as that would favour of madneſs,' ſaid Tiberius; 'but you will ſurely allow that employments abound in every ſtate that may be competently filled by almoſt any deſcription of men.'

'There is not one,' ſaid Beliſarius, 'but demands, if not an able, at leaſt an honeſt man; and royal favour is as little ſolicitous in the ſearch of honeſty as it is of talents. Nor is neglect the only diſgrace they are deſtined to incur: they are continually expoſed to the indignity of a repulſe, which blights the bud of Genius ere it blows, and cankers the promiſing ſeeds of Virtue: for Genius and Virtue are tender plants, that thrive in the ſunſhine of Emulation, but periſh beneath the chilling blaſt of Partiality. The ſtate in which this vice prevails may be compared to thoſe waſte and deſolate plains where ſome few uſeful plants ſpontaneouſly ſhoot forth from the earth, but are impeded in their growth by the brambles that ſurround them: nay, the political evil is but faintly expreſſed by this image of phyſical deſolation; for, under a reign of favourites, the brambles are cultivated and cheriſhed, while every ſalutary plant is eradicated and trampled under foot.'

'Your

'Your arguments,' ſaid Tiberius, 'are founded on the ſuppoſition that 'the favour of the ſovereign, wholly 'unenlightened by wiſdom, is invariably beſtowed on objects unworthy 'to enjoy it.'

'Almoſt invariably,' replied Beliſarius; 'and, if the ſervants of the 'crown were choſen by lot, the mode 'of election would certainly be leſs 'exceptionable. Royal favour is only 'beſtowed on ſuch as condeſcend to 'court it; and merit diſdains the low, 'paltry arts, of intrigue: thoſe, therefore, who are endued with talents that 'might be uſeful to the ſtate, are forgotten by the partial ſovereign, whoſe 'ſmiles they ſcorn to cultivate at the 'expence of feeling; while the aſſiduous ſlaves of Ambition are ſuffered 'to bear away thoſe rewards which 'are the conſtant and ſole objects 'of their purſuit. To a prince thus 'ſwayed by prejudice, what acceſs 'can there be for the ſage or the hero? 'Can they degrade themſelves to the 'pliancy of ſlaves? Can dignity of 'mind ſubmit to become a fawning 'candidate for royal favour? If entitled by birth to approach the perſon 'of the ſovereign, what part can be 'acted, in the circle of his favourites, by 'Truth, Honour, and Integrity? Are 'they likely to excel in the dexterous 'arts of flattery and diſſimulation? 'Will they condeſcend to ſtudy the 'paſſions of their maſter, and explore 'the hidden propenſities of his heart? 'The characters of the ſycophant and 'of the diſſembler will be better ſupported by others, who know how to 'avoid, with anxious care, every offenſive topick, and to dwell but on ſuch 'ſubjects as are grateful to the royal 'ear. It is a thouſand to one that a 'favourite is unworthy the confidence 'repoſed in him.'

'The favourite of a monarch endued with wiſdom, juſtice, and diſcernment,' ſaid the Emperor, 'muſt 'infallibly be a man of integrity.'

'A wiſe, juſt, and diſcerning monarch,' replied Beliſarius, 'has no favourite: he is worthy to have friends, 'and friends he will be ſure to find; 'but favour will do nothing for them; 'they would bluſh to obtain either 'wealth or preferment from ſuch a 'ſource. If ever there was a ſincere 'friend, the Emperor Trajan had ſuch 'a one to boaſt of in his miniſter Longinus. When he was taken priſoner 'by the Dacians, the king of that people ſignified to the Emperor that, unleſs he acceded to the conditions of 'peace propoſed to him, the captive 'miniſter ſhould be put to death. What 'was Trajan's anſwer? He allowed 'Longinus the honour of deciding for 'him, as Regulus had formerly decided for himſelf. Such men are the 'objects of my eſteem. How glorious 'to be the friend of ſuch a prince as 'Trajan! The brave Longinus, ſenſible of the honour conferred on him, 'profited by the bright occaſion, and 'poiſoned himſelf immediately, leſt 'pity ſhould recover it's place in the 'breaſt of the Emperor, and impel him 'to the commiſſion of an act of partiality.'

'I am overpowered by the force of 'your arguments,' ſaid Tiberius: 'yes, 'I now perceive that the affections of 'the ſovereign ſhould never be allowed 'to interfere with the publick good; 'but he may ſometimes form private attachments which can only concern 'himſelf.'

'He cannot form a ſingle attachment,' replied Beliſarius, 'that is not of conſequence to the ſtate. A prince can 'have no diſjunctive intereſt: his every 'action has an influence on the community; and even his very civilities 'ſhould be diſtributed with judgment. 'Men are apt to perſuade themſelves 'that partiality in trifles is an evil of 'little importance; but the privilege 'of beſtowing favours is poſſeſſed of 'ſuch powerful attractions, the practice of diſpenſing them is ſo grateful 'to the human mind, that when a 'prince has once revelled in it's ſweets, 'he will no longer be inclined to ſubmit to reſtraints. The circle of his 'favour is enlarged: the deſire of obtaining admiſſion gives birth to intrigue; and, the fence being once 'thrown down, how ſhall a ſovereign 'be able to reſiſt the ardour of importunity, and the frequency of ſolicitation? The only fence, my Tiberius, that can withſtand the inſidious 'attacks of intrigue, is a fervent diſpoſition to goodneſs and juſtice. When 'a prince, in the choice of his miniſters, 'is guided ſolely by equity, merit

'alone

'alone can hope for preferment. Rigid 'virtue, diſtinguiſhed talents, and emi-'nent ſervices, are the only titles he 'acknowledges to be valid; and every 'candidate for promotion muſt render 'himſelf worthy of the honour he ſeeks 'to obtain. In ſuch times, emulation 'is encouraged by the ſuppreſſion of 'intrigue; and Ambition, ſhuddering 'at the thoughts of detection, is obliged to purſue the path of Candour, 'and to abandon her little ſchemes of 'perfidy and cunning. But, when a 'prince is ſwayed by perſonal affection, every man has an equal claim to 'his favour. He who is beſt verſed in 'the arts of inſinuation, and knows 'how to cabal with the minion of a 'minion, riſes by regular gradations to 'the ſummit of ſplendid and lucrative 'infamy. While the pliant ſlave obtains preferment, the virtuous mind 'keeps at a diſtance, and is conſigned 'to oblivion. Or if his ſervice be required for ſome affair of importance, 'ſome tranſaction worthy the exertion 'of his talents, and the impoſſibility 'of accompliſhing it without his aſſiſtance ſhould induce the ſovereign to 'call him from obſcurity, he is ſure to 'find all parties—for he ſcorns to be 'connected with any—united for his 'deſtruction; and he is reduced to the 'degrading alternative of encountering 'his enemies with their own weapons, 'or ſurrendering to them at diſcretion. 'The court where intrigue predominates is a chaos of paſſions, in which 'Wiſdom itſelf can never diſtinguiſh 'the voice of Truth from the accents of 'Deceit: the publick good is entirely 'diſregarded; perſonal affection becomes the fountain both of praiſe and 'cenſure; and the prince, wholly encompaſſed with falſhoods, diſtracted with 'doubt, ſuſpicion, and miſtruſt, ſeldom 'emerges from a ſtate of uncertainty but 'to plunge himſelf into error.'

'Why does he not depend upon the 'evidence of facts?' ſaid Tiberius. 'Facts are obſtinate witneſſes; and the 'teſtimony they deliver is open and 'convincive.'

'Facts,' replied Beliſarius, 'are not 'ſo convincive as you may imagine: 'even facts are liable to change; and 'each new report gives them a new 'complexion. Every enterprize is 'judged by it's event: yet events too 'frequently tend to the juſtification of 'imprudence, and defeat the beſt concerted ſchemes of genius and ability. 'A man is ſometimes more fortunate 'than wiſe; at others, more wiſe than 'fortunate: in either caſe, the ſovereign can with difficulty appreciate 'his ſervices, particularly if his judgment be biaſſed by the opinion of his 'courtiers.'

'Juſtinian, in his old age,' ſaid the Emperor, 'affords a melancholy proof 'of the truth of your obſervation: he 'has been cruelly deceived!'

'Alas!' replied Beliſarius, 'who 'knows better than myſelf how much 'the favour of Juſtinian has been 'abuſed by the inſidious wiles of pretended friendſhip? Who is better acquainted with the ſnares laid for him 'by the treacherous hands of Faction? 'It was Faction ſent Narſes into Italy 'to interrupt the proſperity of Beliſarius: the Emperor had no intention to make the miniſter of his finances the rival of his commander in 'chief. But Narſes had his faction at 'court; and he ſoon raiſed one in the 'camp: a ſpirit of diſſenſion prevailed; 'and Milan, the bulwark of Italy, was 'loſt. Narſes was recalled; but too 'late, the miſchief was done: Milan 'had been ſacked, her inhabitants put 'to the ſword, and all Liguria diſmembered from the empire. I ſincerely rejoice that Narſes was pardoned by the Emperor: for, having 'ſaved the life of ſo great a man *, we 'have at leaſt one obligation to the decline of military diſcipline. But had 'Narſes lived when Rome was a republick, he would have paid with his 'head for the double crime of diſobedience, and the ſeduction of a part of 'my army. I was recalled in my 'turn. To ſucceed me in the command of the army, eleven chiefs, all 'jealous of each other, were appointed 'through the intrigues of a new faction. Diſcord prevailed in their councils, and they were defeated. The 'entire loſs of Italy was the conſequence. The command was then

* In bello qui rem à duce prohibitam fecit, aut mandata non ſervavit, capite punitur, etiamſi rem bene geſſerit. *Pand. Lib.* 49. *Tit.* 16.

'transferred

'transferred to me; but I was a general without an army. I was obliged 'to traverſe Thrace and Illyria in 'queſt of troops. A ſcanty number, 'not exceeding four thouſand, were 'collected together. With this irregular body, who had neither cloaths, 'horſes, arms, nor proviſions, I marched into Italy. In this condition, 'what could I do? With the utmoſt 'difficulty I ſaved Rome from falling 'into the hands of the enemy. Yet, 'while affairs were in this melancholy 'ſituation, and the ſtate was menaced 'with deſtruction, my enemies were 'exulting at court, and congratulating 'each other on the diſtreſs to which I 'was reduced, and on the proſpect of 'witneſſing the ſpeedy completion of 'my ruin. Regardleſs of the publick 'good, I was the ſole object of their 'attention; and, could the deſtruction 'of their country have been productive 'of my deſtruction, they would have 'rejoiced to behold it. I applied for a 'reinforcement, and received my letters 'of recal. Narſes was ſent with a 'powerful army to ſucceed me; and 'Narſes was, doubtleſs, poſſeſſed of 'abilities to juſtify the choice. His 'appointment to the command was, 'perhaps, a publick benefit; but they 'could not injure me without impeding 'the progreſs of my arms. The ruin 'of Beliſarius was purchaſed at the 'expence of the ſtate. Such are the 'fatal effects of intrigue; in that conſiſts the grand evil of Faction. For 'the elevation or deſtruction of an individual ſhe will ſacrifice an army, or 'even an empire!'

'Alas!' exclaimed Juſtinian, 'you 'have now explained to me the treacherous arts that were employed to 'obſcure your glory. How weak muſt 'the Emperor have been to have liſtened to the ſuggeſtions of your enemies!'

'My worthy neighbour,' replied Beliſarius, 'you are little aware of the 'degree of refinement to which court-'policy has attained in the arts of deſtruction: you do not know the genius of intrigue; how active it is, 'how perſevering, how aſſiduous, and 'inſinuating! It does not venture to 'oppoſe the opinion of the ſovereign, 'nor openly to reſiſt his inclinations; 'reſpectful and cautious, it proceeds 'with circumſpection, and operates it's 'effects by ſlow and imperceptible gradations: like the ſtream that at firſt 'gently oozes through it's feeble bank, 'then ſaps it's foundation by repeated 'efforts, and at laſt burſts through it 'with irreſiſtible force. Faction, too, 'has this farther advantage on it's ſide, 'that the man of honour who is the object of it's attacks, being without diſtruſt, is of courſe without precaution; 'he has nothing to oppoſe to the malice 'of his enemies but his upright conduct, 'which is ever ſubject to the miſrepreſentations of Envy; and his honeſt 'name, of which the report that echoes 'through the realm expires and is loſt 'at the gates of the palace. There the 'voice of Envy alone finds acceſs; and 'woe to the abſent hero againſt whom 'her envenomed accents are directed! It 'is the common courſe of human events. 'Every commander muſt inevitably experience ſome interruption in the train 'of his victories: Envy takes the advantage of every occurrence; converts 'misfortune into crimes; and makes 'even accidents a ground of impeachment. Has the commander done all 'that was poſſible, he is reproached 'for not having done more; he is told 'that another leader would have adopted a different line of conduct, and 'have obtained advantages which he 'has ſuffered to eſcape. On one hand, 'his miſconduct is aggravated; on the 'other, the good he has effected is reduced to nothing; and the reſult is, 'that the man who has been of moſt 'uſe to his country is conſidered as the 'moſt dangerous perſon in it. But the 'misfortune that accrues to the publick 'from his fall is unhappily increaſed by 'the elevation of ſome worthleſs being whom the ſame faction that hath 'promoted his ruin appoints to ſucceed 'him. To behold Virtue depreſſed, 'and Vice exulting in proſperity, makes 'a deep and dangerous impreſſion on 'the minds of men. Hence publick 'ſpirit is extinguiſhed, and the moſt 'important duties are wholly neglected; 'Shame herſelf acquires courage, and 'Crime forgets to bluſh: in ſhort, from 'this baleful ſource is derived every 'ſpecies of licentiouſneſs that impunity 'can authorize. Such are the evils 'that attend a reign of favouritiſm! 'Judge yourſelf how much they may 'accelerate the decline of our empire.'

'Without

'Without doubt,' ſaid Juſtinian, 'it 'is a dangerous infirmity in a prince; 'but it may be excuſable in an old man, 'who, after ſtruggling with Fortune, 'to no purpoſe, for more than thir- 'ty years, is doomed at laſt to behold 'the veſſel of the ſtate, ſhattered by 'ſtorms, on the point of ſinking: for 'it is in vain to deceive ourſelves with 'flattering hopes. Even now, the em- 'pire, oppreſſed by it's own fate, is 'verging to it's ruin; all it's vigour is 'exhauſted by the length of it's dura- 'tion; and it muſt ſoon experience the 'common fate of kingdoms—that 'fate which the vaſt empires of Belus 'and Cyrus have experienced before it. 'Like them it has flouriſhed, like them 'it muſt paſs away.'

'I am no fataliſt,' replied Beliſarius, 'in regard to revolutions of govern- 'ment: to encourage ſuch ideas, would 'be to ſanction our preſent degeneracy 'of ſpirit, and render deſpair ſyſtema- 'tical. That all ſublunary things, and 'kingdoms amongſt them, periſh and 'die away, I am not now to learn; 'but I cannot believe that Nature has 'traced the exact bounds of their exiſt- 'ence. It is true, there is a period 'aſſigned to the life of man, when the 'animal functions decay, and he is ob- 'liged to reſign himſelf to his fate. The 'body politick is, doubtleſs, ſubject to 'convulſions that ſhake it's frame; to 'ſlow diſorders that conſume it's vigour; 'and to ſpaſms, that elevate for a while 'but to plunge it into deeper dejection 'afterwards. It's ſtrength is diminiſhed 'by exceſs of labour, it ſuffers relax- 'ation from inactivity, and it's conſti- 'tution is broken by civil contention; 'but not one of theſe accidents is mor- 'tal. Nations have been recovered from 'the brink of deſtruction; they have 'emerged from the very depths of miſe- 'ry; and, after ſtruggling through the 'moſt violent criſis, have experienced a 'renovation of luſtre and ſtrength ſu- 'perior to their primitive vigour. The 'decline of ſtates is not, therefore, mark- 'ed out like the limits of human life: 'they know not the infirmities of old 'age, which muſt be conſidered as a 'chimera that exiſts but in the brain of 'miſtaken theoriſts. The hope that 'inſpirits valour may give animation 'to the body politick, and ſuſtain it for 'any length of time. The conſtitution 'of the empire is now enfeebled, or, ra- 'ther, it has ſunk into a ſtate of lan- 'guor; but the remedy, as well as the 'evil, is to be diſcovered in Nature, and 'we have only to look for it.'

'Deign to join us,' ſaid the Empe- ror, 'in the ſoothing reſearch: but, be- 'fore we think of the remedy, let us 'trace the diſorder to it's ſource.'— 'With all my heart,' replied Beliſarius; 'it will furniſh us ample matter for our 'future diſcuſſion.'

CHAP. XI.

JUSTINIAN, more impatient than ever to ſee Beliſarius, haſtened his viſit the next day; and preſſed him with earneſtneſs to remove the veil that had ſo long concealed from his ſight the evils that preyed on the conſtitution of the empire. Beliſarius dated his reflections from the æra of Conſtantine. 'How 'much it is to be regretted,' ſaid the hero, 'that ſo enlarged a genius, en- 'dued with ſo much courage and firm- 'neſs, and with ſuch a ſpirit of enter- 'prize, ſhould have been ſo egregiouſly 'miſtaken in his views, as to exert, for 'the ruin of his empire, more vigour 'and activity than would have ſufficed 'to produce a renovation of it's pri- 'mitive ſplendour! His new ſyſtem of 'government is a *chef-d'œuvre* of hu- 'man wiſdom. The abolition of the 'Prætorian bands; the adoption of the 'children of the poor by the ſtate*; 'the diviſion and conſequent diminu- 'tion of the authority of the Prefect; 'the appropriation of the lands on the 'frontiers to the veteran troops, who 'were by this means moſt powerfully 'ſtimulated to the defence of their coun- 'try by the ſagacious union of inte- 'reſt with duty: theſe were inſtitutions 'that ſpoke true wiſdom and greatneſs 'of ſoul. Why did he deviate from a 'plan ſo juſt and ſimple? He either 'did not, or would not, ſee, that by

* When the father declared his inability to maintain his child, the ſtate took the charge upon itſelf, and the infant was educated at the publick expence. This law Conſtantine directed to be engraved on marble, that it might be rendered perpetual.

'tranſporting

'transporting the ſeat of the empire, 'it's moſt ſolid foundation muſt inevi-'tably be ſhaken. In vain did he flat-'ter himſelf with making his new city 'a ſecond Rome; in vain was the an-'cient metropolis of the empire deſpoil-'ed of it's richeſt ornaments, to deco-'rate the new capital; it was a mere 'theatrical ſhifting of ſcenery, the fri-'volous repreſentation of a ſenſeleſs 'pantomime.'

'You aſtoniſh me,' ſaid Tiberius, interrupting him; 'to me the capital of 'the world ever appeared more advan-'tageouſly ſituated upon the Boſpho-'rus, between two ſeas, with Aſia on 'one ſide, and Europe on the other, 'than in the heart of Italy, on the 'banks of a rivulet which is ſcarcely 'navigable by a ſimple bark.'

'Conſtantine thought as you do,' replied Beliſarius, 'and he was miſta-'ken. The ſtate which is obliged 'to employ it's troops in foreign 'countries ſhould be governed by a 'ſound policy, that can enforce obedi-'ence without difficulty; ſhould be 'compact within itſelf, and eaſy to be 'defended. Such was the advantage 'of Italy. It ſeemed to have been 'formed by Nature for the ſeat of uni-'verſal empire; a reſidence for the 'maſters of the world. The moun-'tains and the ſea, by which it is 'encompaſſed, preſerved it from in-'vaſion, at little expence; guard but 'the Alps, and Rome was ſafe. But 'if ſome potent foe burſt through it's 'native barriers, the Appennines af-'forded a ſafe retreat, and ſerved as a 'rampart to one half of Italy. It was 'there that the Gauls were vanquiſhed 'by Camillus, and that Narſes obtain-'ed his brilliant victory over Totila.

'At preſent the empire has no fixed 'and immoveable centre, but lies ex-'poſed on every ſide to the attacks of 'it's enemies. Aſk the Scythian, the 'Sarmatian, and the Sclavonian, whe-'ther the Heber, the Danube, and the 'Tanais, are barriers that inſpire them 'with dread, and induce them to re-'ſtrain their incurſions? No; on that 'ſide, Byzantium is our only rampart; 'yet the bad ſtate of it's walls is not 'the circumſtance that afflicts me 'moſt.

'When Rome was the ſeat of the 'empire, the vigilance and activity of 'it's laws were extended, with eaſe, 'from the centre of the ſtate to it's very 'extremities; every part of Italy was 'equally affected by their ſalutary in-'fluence; they formed the publick 'manners; and thoſe manners, in their 'turn, ſupplied them with faithful mi-'niſters. The ſame laws, indeed, ſtill 'exiſt; but as all is tranſplanted from the 'place of it's growth, the conſequence 'is, that every thing droops, as if regret-'ting it's native ſoil; the conſtitution 'is deprived of that harmony which is 'eſſential to it's preſervation; the na-'tional ſpirit is no longer diſtinguiſh-'ed by any leading characteriſtick; 'the nation itſelf is even without a 'name. Italy was then renowned for 'men who imbibed with their firſt 'breath the love of their country, and 'received their education in the *Cam-'pus Martius*. Where now is the era-'dle? where now the ſchool for warri-'ors? The Dalmatians, the Illyrians, 'and the Thracians, are as much fo-'reigners to us as the Numidians and 'the Moors; they are bound to us by 'no unity of intereſt; they have no 'ſpirit of patriotiſm, to animate them 'to virtuous actions, or urge them to 'deeds of glory. "*Remember that you "are Romans,*" ſaid a general of ancient 'Rome to his ſoldiers; and that 'ſhort, but comprehenſive harangue, 'inſpired them with ſtrength which no 'fatigue could ſubdue, and courage 'which no dangers could intimidate. 'What could we now ſay to inſpirit 'our troops? "*Remember that ye are "Arminians, Numidians, or Dalma-"tians?*"—The ſtate is no longer one 'ſingle compact body; there lies the 'chief ſource of our debility; and the 'projectors of our new ſettlement were 'not aware that whole ages were requi-'ſite to eſtabliſh that unity of intereſts 'which we call our country, and which 'is produced by the ſlow and imper-'ceptible operations of habit and opi-'nion. Conſtantine embelliſhed his 'new city with the ſtatues of Roman 'heroes. Vain ſtratagem! Alas! theſe 'ſacred images ſeemed to be endued 'with life when placed in the Capitol; 'but the genius that inſpired them 'with animation was left behind; we 'imported nothing but the marble. 'Paulus Emilius, the Scipios and the 'Catos, are ſilent here. They are fo-

'reigners at Byzantium; but at Rome 'they ſpoke to the people, and the people underſtood them.'

'I do not perceive,' ſaid Juſtinian, 'that the empire enjoyed more tranquillity and happineſs, for ſome years 'before the ſeat of government was removed, than it does at preſent. The 'people of Rome had fallen into a ſtate 'of degeneracy; and the ſenate, if poſſible, had ſtill more degenerated from 'their ancient virtue than the people 'themſelves.'

'When the reins of government are 'entruſted to improper hands,' replied Beliſarius, 'the ſtate muſt unavoidably 'become weak, and the people wretched. At Rome, however, one good 'reign might have ſufficed to correct 'the errors of Ignorance, repair the 'injuries of Corruption, and give a 'new appearance to publick affairs. 'From what a ſtate of depreſſion did 'the ſtate emerge under the adminiſtration of the Emperor Adrian! and to 'what an height of glory and magnificence did it attain when Marcus 'Aurelius was ſeated on the Imperial 'throne! Roman virtue has been often eclipſed, but never extinguiſhed. 'Whenever a prince appeared with a 'genius to rekindle the latent embers, 'they were always ready to mount into a blaze. But every principle of virtue has been deſtroyed in Byzantium. 'The ſeeds muſt be ſown again; and 'that muſt form the glorious occupation of a reign diſtinguiſhed for juſtice and moderation: without ſuch a 'prodigy we muſt inevitably periſh. 'Our very victories are deſtructive to 'the community; we have an hundred 'enemies to oppoſe, who are unanimous 'among themſelves, and who have only us to encounter. While we flatter ourſelves with the idea of having 'totally ſubdued them, we behold them 'riſe again: one foe is no ſooner vanquiſhed than another appears to replace him; and, by a rapid ſucceſſion, 'they afford breathing-time to each 'other. By this diviſion of our arms 'we are daily enfeebled; the march of 'our armies to various and diſtant 'places conſumes our ſtrength; the 'vigour of our meaſures ſtrains every 'nerve; and every victory is a wound 'which has not time to cloſe. Thus, 'after the moſt ſtrenuous exertions of 'the Empire to maintain it's own dignity and importance, a ſingle day ſhall 'ſhake it to it's foundation, and render abortive the ſucceſsful labour of 'twenty years! Recollect how often, 'during the preſent reign, our ſtandard 'has been hurried from the Tiber to 'the Euphrates, from the Euphrates 'to the Danube. And what has been 'the reſult of all our victories, under 'Mundus, Germanicus, Salomon, 'Narſes—and myſelf, if I may be added 'to the number? A peace is the ſole 'fruit we have reaped from them.'

'Since the continuance of war,' ſaid the Emperor, 'muſt inevitably promote 'our deſtruction, peace muſt certainly 'be our dernier reſource.'

'To purchaſe a peace,' replied Beliſarius, 'is not the way to avoid the 'calamities of war. The Barbarians 'of the North only ſally forth in queſt 'of prey; and, the more weakneſs is 'betrayed by the object of their ſearch, 'the more certain they are to obtain 'it. The Perſians need only ſpread an 'alarm every year in our faireſt provinces in Aſia, they are ſure to be 'ſent back loaded with our money. 'A ſingular mode of exterminating 'plunderers, to preſent them with the 'ſpoil that invites their attacks! The 'very means that are employed to procure peace, prove the ſtrongeſt incitements to war; and our Emperors, by 'draining their ſubjects, have only increaſed the rapacity and power of their 'enemies.'

'You affect me ſenſibly,' ſaid Juſtinian. 'By what means, then, would 'you wiſh to ſee the incurſions of the 'enemy reſtrained?'—'By a good army,' replied Beliſarius; 'and, above 'all, by a free and happy people. 'When the Barbarians over-run our 'provinces, they are ſolely attracted 'by the hopes of plunder; and it is of 'little conſequence to them, that deſolation and hatred attend their footſteps, ſo long as they are capable of 'inſpiring terror. The caſe is widely 'different with an empire that ſeeks to 'maintain it's poſſeſſions in a ſtate of 'ſecurity; if it's power be not ſupported by the affections of the people, it 'muſt ſoon ceaſe to exiſt. Authority 'founded on fear can never be durable; 'it's extent muſt be limited; the motive of obedience diminiſhes in pro-

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'portion to the diſtance of the ſubject 'from the metropolis of Deſpotiſm; 'and, at laſt, is wholly annihilated. 'To reign by the ſole influence of fear, 'from Mount Taurus to the Alps, 'from Caucaſus to the Appennines, 'would be morally impoſſible. If the 'ſubject experience oppreſſion, and the 'power of the prince be ſupported by 'the ſweat of his brow, of what mo-'ment is it to him whether his oppreſ-'ſors be Romans or Perſians? The 'authority that burdens where it ought 'to protect, will never be defended 'with ſpirit; and, if a nation be not 'endued with ſufficient courage to re-'lieve itſelf from the yoke of oppreſ-'ſion, it will at leaſt ſubmit to the firſt 'deliverer that appears. The ſureſt 'mode of conciliating the eſteem and 'enſuring the obedience of a conquered 'people, is by a continued diſplay of 'humanity, benevolence, integrity, 'candour, and a vigilant zeal for their 'happineſs and welfare. The ſpirit 'and vigour of the conſtitution is then 'diffuſed over the whole dominion, 'and every province becomes the ſeat 'of government.

'I ſhall have frequent occaſion to 'ſpeak of myſelf,' continued Beliſa-rius; 'and, by conſulting my experi-'ence, you have rendered any apology 'for egotiſm unneceſſary. When I 'carried war into Africa, my firſt care 'was to treat thoſe regions with the 'ſame lenity as my native country. 'The regular and ſtrict diſcipline 'which I eſtabliſhed in my army, at-'tracted plenty from every quarter; 'and, in a little time, I had the ſatis-'faction of ſeeing the neighbouring 'people flock to my camp as to a ſanc-'tuary, and enliſt themſelves under my 'banners. The day on which I en-'tered the gates of Carthage at the 'head of an army flushed with victory, 'not a ſingle murmur of diſcontent was 'heard; neither the tranquillity nor 'uſual occupations of the citizens 'experienced the ſmalleſt interruption; 'Commerce and Induſtry were ſeen to 'purſue their wonted paths, as if it had 'been a time of profound peace; and, 'in return for this attention to their 'intereſts, it only depended on myſelf 'to become the king of a people who 'hailed me as their common father. I 'witneſſed a ſimilar ſcene in Italy: the 'natives came in crowds to offer 'their ſubmiſſion to the Roman Eagle; 'and at Ravenna, the Goths ſupplica-'ted, with great earneſtneſs, their con-'queror to become their ſovereign. 'Such is the influence of humanity! 'But think not that I am proud of 'my ſucceſs; my ſole merit conſiſts in 'having followed the leſſons which I 'received from the Barbarians them-'ſelves. Yes, even the Barbarians 'can boaſt their Titus, and their 'Marcus Aurelius. Theodoric and 'Totila deſerved the love of all man-'kind.—O ye cities of Italy,' ex-claimed Beliſarius, 'what a contraſt 'have ye witneſſed between our con-'duct and that of the Barbarians! At 'Naples, in particular, men, women, 'and children, were indiſcriminately 'butchered before my eyes! I flew to 'their aſſiſtance: I ſnatched the inno-'cent victims from the hands of an 'enraged ſoldiery; but I was ſin-'gle in my oppoſition to their bru-'tality, and my entreaties were loſt in 'air. The men whoſe duty it was to 'ſecond my efforts were intent on 'plunder. The ſame city was after-'wards taken by the generous Totila. 'Happy prince! he had the glory of 'preſerving it from the fury of his 'troops. His deportment was that of 'a tender father in the midſt of his 'family. Humanity cannot furniſh a 'more affecting ſcene than this gallant 'leader exerting his beſt endeavours 'for the protection of a people that had 'juſt ſurrendered to his arms. His 'conduct was the ſame at Rome; that 'very Rome in which the officers of 'the empire had recently carried on, 'in the midſt of all the horrors of fa-'mine, the deteſtable trade of mo-'nopoly. It was in this manner our 'enemies conciliated the affections of 'the people: their juſtice and their mo-'deration hurt us more than their valour.

'Inſtead of imitating their glorious 'examples, the inhumanity, avarice, 'and tyranny of our commanders, 'leagued with the enemy, and ſerved 'their cauſe. I had no ſooner reſign-'ed the command in Italy, than theſe 'ſame Goths, whoſe proffered crown 'I had juſt refuſed, inſpired with a 'juſt ſpirit of indignation at the op-'preſſions of thoſe who ſucceeded me, 'reſolved to ſhake off the yoke. Hence 'the reign of Totila, and all our mis-'fortunes in Italy. After ſubduing the

'Vandals, I had ſucceeded in perſuading the Moors to live on terms of amity with the Empire; but my back was ſcarcely turned, when our illuſtrious plunderers, our honourable ſons of Luxury and Rapine, violated every treaty I had made; and, far from preſerving that peace and harmony I had been anxious to eſtabliſh, committed the moſt horrid depredations, pillaged their defenceleſs cities, and ſpread deſolation over their plains. Deſpair ſoon urged the Moors to vengeance, and our provinces were deluged with blood. Thus oppreſſion will ever excite revolt; and by revolt all the bonds of peace are rent aſunder.

'The ſame cauſes have produced the ſame effects in the heart of the empire. Indolence in Prefects; a ſpirit of rapaciouſneſs in Proconſuls; inhumanity and deſpotiſm in the governors of cities and provinces; theſe are the enormities which I have witneſſed in every quarter. To theſe it is owing that all publick offices have become ſo burdenſome to the people; that, to retain the principal citizens in a ſtate of obedience, it has been found neceſſary to exclude them from the militia, and from the order of prieſthood; even to prohibit them from alienating their property; and, what will never be believed by poſterity, to deprive them of the wretched reſource of becoming bondſmen. Can it be expected that, harraſſed thus cruelly, the people will be reconciled to the yoke that galls them? Can they poſſibly think themſelves bound, either by intereſt or duty, to ſuch rigorous oppreſſors? Every murmur extorted by miſery and deſpair is inſtantly magnified into treaſon; and armies are marched to ſpread devaſtation through the provinces. A cruel mode of ſeducing men to obedience, by the completion of their ruin! And then, of what uſe are ſubjects whoſe minds are thus depreſſed by ſervitude? A well-governed people will be at once both ſpirited and complying; and the union of theſe qualities would infallibly take place, but for the pride and arrogance of thoſe ſubaltern tyrants who too frequently convert the mild adminiſtration of an equitable prince into an odious ſyſtem of cruelty and deſpotiſm.

'A ſovereign muſt neceſſarily depend on thoſe miniſters, to whom he is obliged to delegate a part of his authority, for the affection or hatred of his ſubjects; it is therefore his duty to watch them with an eye of vigilance and circumſpection: they are the moſt cruel and dangerous enemies he has to encounter; for they expoſe him to the averſion of his people, which is the greateſt misfortune that can befal a monarch. Every act they commit in compliance with the dictates of pride, avarice, and caprice, is by them aſcribed to the will of their maſter. Were their affirmations to obtain belief, every illegal exertion of authority would be conſidered as a freſh proof of their paſſive obedience; and thus the prince is made the involuntary, unconſcious, ſcourge of a people he loves. My dear Tiberius,' continued the hero, 'ſhould any ſovereign hereafter have the happineſs to call you his friend, adviſe him ſtrenuouſly never to ſlacken the reins of authority, but ſo to hold them, that all thoſe to whom he entruſts any portion of his power may feel the curb of Juſtice. Every act of injuſtice committed in the name of the prince is ſure to reflect diſhonour on his reign, and to draw down the maledictions of the oppreſſed on his head. But, if the people are convinced that their ſovereign affords them protection, and is willing to redreſs their grievances, the complaints of the injured will indeed be addreſſed to the throne, but no murmurs of diſcontent will be found to approach it; while publick indignation, confined to the authors of publick miſchief, will leave the juſt and upright prince in poſſeſſion of the hearts of his ſubjects.'

'There is not any thing,' ſaid Juſtinian, 'more beautiful in theory than a prince attending to the movement of every minute wheel in the complicated machine of government. But the multiplicity of objects would render it's reduction to practice impoſſible. To hear the complaints of his people, to inveſtigate their merits, and decide with juſtice, would be a taſk that no prince could accompliſh.'

'Thoſe are the phantoms of Difficulty,' replied Beliſarius, 'conjured up to deter him from the undertaking; but, examine them with an eye of attention, and they will ſpeedily vaniſh. You will ſee, to-morrow, that the art of government is leſs complicated than men are apt to imagine.—Farewell,

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'my friends! You ſee how, of my 'own accord, I engage myſelf more 'deeply in this diſcuſſion than I at firſt 'intended. To ſway ideal ſceptres is 'a ſpecies of folly with which moſt men 'are infected; and there are few, I be-'lieve, who, in their political dreams, 'do not, like myſelf, amuſe themſelves 'with regulating the fate of empires.' —'Political theories,' ſaid Juſtinian, 'are the delirious chimeras of the vul-'gar, but they form the nobleſt object 'of contemplation to the ſage.'

The Emperor withdrew, with his mind deeply impreſſed with the various reflections he had heard; and that very night, while he was at ſupper, his courtiers remarked that the empire was never in a more flouriſhing or happy condition. 'Without doubt,' ſaid Juſtinian, 'the empire muſt be in a 'flouriſhing ſtate, for you riot in abun-'dance: it muſt be happy alſo, for you 'paſs your days in ſloth and luxury. 'You conſider the people as mere cy-'phers in the ſtate, and think that the 'whole empire is comprized within the 'circumſcribed limits of the court.' At theſe words they all looked abaſh-ed; they had no longer any doubt, that the melancholy which had of late overcaſt the countenance of the Emperor was entirely occaſioned by his conferences with Tiberius. 'Tibe-'rius,' ſaid they, 'is a young en-'thuſiaſt, whoſe mind is tainted with 'the folly of humanity. A man of 'that diſpoſition is dangerous at court: 'we muſt endeavour to remove him 'from the Emperor's preſence.'

CHAP. XII.

THE next day, while the courtiers were employed in the adoption of a plan for putting their new deſign in execution, the old blind hero and his two gueſts reſumed the thread of their diſcourſe.

'The ſovereign,' ſaid Beliſarius, 'who wiſhes to keep the reins of go-'vernment in his own hands, ought to 'know how to reduce things to their 'moſt ſimple principles. To diſcover 'the true intereſt of his people*, and 'the conduct they expect him to ob-'ſerve, ſhould be his firſt care.'— 'That alone,' ſaid Tiberius, 'requires 'immenſe ſtudy.'—'Nothing is more 'ſimple,' replied the hero; 'for the 'wants of an individual are the wants 'of all; and every one of us can judge, 'from our own feelings, of what is 'uſeful to the whole human ſpecies. 'As for inſtance,' ſaid he to Tiberius, 'were you compelled to earn a ſubſiſt-'ence by the labours of huſbandry, 'what would you expect from the be-'nevolence of your ſovereign?'—'I 'ſhould expect,' replied the youth, 'ſecurity for the fruits of my induſtry; 'and the privilege of enjoying them in 'peace, after the dues of the crown 'were diſcharged, with my wife and 'children. I ſhould expect the pro-'tection of my property againſt fraud 'and rapine; the protection of myſelf 'and family from violence, injuſtice, 'and oppreſſion.'—'Very well,' ſaid Beliſarius: 'in that conſiſts the whole; 'and every citizen, according to his 'condition, requires the ſame, and no-'thing more. And what does the 'prince, on his part,' continued Beli-ſarius, 'demand from his ſubjects?'— 'Obedience, tribute, and a proper force 'to ſupport his own dignity and the 'execution of his laws.'—'That, a-'gain, is ſimple and juſt,' ſaid Beliſa-rius. 'And what, now, are the reci-'procal duties of the people, in their 'relation to one another?'—'To live 'in peace and concord, to injure no 'man, to leave to every one the quiet 'poſſeſſion of his own, and to preſerve 'an honeſt intercourſe and good faith 'in all their tranſactions.'—'That, my 'friend, is a true epitome of human 'happineſs; and you plainly ſee that, 'to enforce it, the laws need not be 'very voluminous. There was a time 'when all the laws of Rome were com-'prized in twelve tables; and thoſe 'times were at leaſt as good as our own. 'What we call juſt is but the balance 'of what is uſeful; and conſiſts in the 'portion allotted to each individual 'from the publick good. Let Equity 'alone adjuſt the account, and the code 'that directs it need not be long. But 'that which is ſimple in it's nature is 'now confuſed by artifice; and the 'doctrine of Equity, in itſelf ſhort,

* Semper officio fungitur, utilitati hominum conſulens et ſocietati. *Cic. de Off.* 3.

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'plain, and intelligible to every capacity, is rendered perplexed, complicated, and difficult to define, by the vicious progreſs of modern refinement. This important evil proceeds from the captious caprice of an arbitrary diſpoſition, which ſets up it's own will as law; and, as that will is continually fluctuating, the law muſt of courſe be ever vague and uncertain. It proceeds from the pitiful dread of not impoſing ſufficient reſtraints on the liberty of the ſubject; it proceeds from the pride and jealouſy of Power, which never thinks it can make it's weight ſufficiently felt; and, finally, it proceeds from the vain and fooliſh deſire of entering into a thouſand minute particulars for the purpoſe of adopting regulations where no regulation is required. An ample collection of edicts and decrees, without number, has been made in the preſent reign; but they are ſolely calculated for the information of lawyers, and not for that of the people: whereas it is the people who ought to be inſtructed in their duties and their rights. Every citizen ought, in the firſt inſtance, to be his own judge: it is therefore requiſite that every man ſhould know what is preſcribed, forbidden, and permitted, by the law*. For this purpoſe, ſimplicity and perſpicuity in the laws are eſſentially requiſite: they ſhould, moreover, be few in number; founded in wiſdom, and eaſy of application. This would greatly facilitate the adminiſtration of juſtice, and render the duty of miniſters clear and preciſe: for, when the ſubject clearly underſtands the nature of the obligations impoſed on him, and the rights that are his due, he becomes proud of his ſecurity, and content with his dependence; he perceives the advantages that accrue to him from the portion of natural liberty which he has been obliged to reſign as a member of civil ſociety; and, finding his own welfare in that of the publick, is induced to reverence the authority which promotes their connection.

'To what reaſon are we to aſcribe the frequent impatience of the ſubject to ſupport the yoke of authority? To this melancholy cauſe: that the laws, which are framed for the reſtraint or limitation of his natural privileges, are ever expounded with rigour; while thoſe which are favourable to freedom, and ought to afford him protection, receive too often a negligent and partial conſtruction. But the fair ſimplicity of a popular code would afford an effectual remedy to this dangerous abuſe; for, when the judges found the people ſufficiently inſtructed in the rules of right, and in a capacity to oppoſe to their deciſions a fixed and determinate law, they would not dare to depart from it, nor to render it's ſpirit ſubſervient to their own diſcretion.

'The laws which are moſt liable to abuſe, are thoſe which affect the property of the ſubject; for his life and liberty are ſeldom in danger. The hands of the people are never tied up but with an intention to plunder them. Of the numerous exceſſes committed by the officers of the revenue, there is ſcarcely one which is not founded in avarice. This, then, is the firſt object to which the eye of the ſovereign ſhould be directed: his firſt care ſhould be to ſimplify the collection of national impoſts. So long as the ſyſtem of taxation ſhall remain in it's preſent vague, complex and confuſed ſtate†, the adminiſtration of this department will be fraudulent and oppreſſive, in ſpite of the moſt ſerious efforts to correct the injuſtice of it's proceedings. The ſyſtem itſelf muſt therefore be rendered ſimple and clear; the laws by which it is regulated ſhould be preciſe and invariable; and the impoſt itſelf, without which no government can exiſt‡, ſhould be equal, eaſy, and founded in the fitneſs of things: it ſhould be general and uniform, laid

* Legis virtus hæc eſt; imperare, vetare, permittere, punire. *Pand. Lib.* i. *Tit.* 3.

† Sub imperatoribus vectigalia, non lege ac ratione, ſed arbitratu imperatorum proceſſerunt. *Buling. de Tribut. ac Vectig. P. R.*

‡ Nam neque quies gentium ſine armis, neque arma ſine ſtipendiis, neque ſtipendia ſine tributis haberi queunt. *Tacit. Hiſtor. Lib.* iv. *Cap.* 74.

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'on real and ſolid property, and variable only according to the value of that property. Such a tax, for inſtance, as that which Sicily* paid with pleaſure to the Romans; or like that which Cæſar impoſed on the provinces of Aſia†, and whoſe equity obtained him the veneration of the nations. Fraud would then find no refuge in the dark labyrinth of abſurd and whimſical edicts ‡; the very law that authorized the collection would define the duties of the collector; and the ſyſtem of taxation, by ceaſing to be arbitrary, would ceaſe to be odious.'

'You know,' ſaid the Emperor, 'what arguments are oppoſed to the principles you ſeek to enforce. By making taxation ſimple, you muſt inevitably reduce it.'—'I hope ſo,' ſaid Beliſarius.'—'But,' replied Juſtinian, 'it is affirmed, that if the people are in too eaſy circumſtances, they become lazy, arrogant, rebellious, and untractable.'—'Juſt Heaven!' exclaimed Beliſarius, 'will aſſuring to men the fruits of their labour inſpire them with an averſion to induſtry? Will the ſecurity of their happineſs urge them to rebellion? But it is feared they will become arrogant! Too well I know that petty tyrants would wiſh to ſee the ſubject crouch like a ſlave beneath the laſh of his maſter; but, if his conduct be free from crime, and exempt from reproach, to whom ſhould he bend? There is no power on earth but that of the laws, and of the legal ſovereign, to which an honeſt member of ſociety owes any deference. Nor is there any authority ſo ſure of commanding obedience as that which eſtabliſhes a kind of paternal empire over the hearts of men, by works of beneficence, that call for gratitude, affection, and eſteem. Believe me, I know the people well; they are not what they are repreſented; they are only to be enervated by miſery, and diſguſted by oppreſſion; if their minds are ſoured, and betray a ſpirit of revolt, it proceeds from deſpair, occaſioned by the diſcouraging circumſtance of finding themſelves conſtantly employed in acquiring, and never ſure of poſſeſſing. This is the plain truth; a truth apparent to all, but unfortunately intereſted men have attempted to diſguiſe it by all the various arts of diſſimulation; and, in oppoſition to it, have erected a ſyſtem of their own, which they endeavour to ſupport with the whole force of their authority. This ſyſtem is founded on the idea that the human ſpecies exiſts but for the ſervice of a few individuals, and that for them only was the world created.'—'It is an inconceivable pride,' ſaid the Emperor, 'and yet it certainly exiſts in the minds of many.'—'No,' replied Beliſarius, 'it never did exiſt: many indeed there are who pretend to believe in it; but ſuch a paradox in politicks can never obtain belief. There never was a man, endued with common ſenſe, however elevated his ſtation, who, on a comparative view of himſelf with the people who ſupport, who defend and protect him, did not experience a ſecret humiliation; for he muſt be ſenſible of his own weakneſs, his numerous neceſſities, and his conſequent ſtate of dependence. His pride is a mere maſk aſſumed for the purpoſe of deception; but the misfortune is, that it enables him to deceive too many. May Heaven preſerve your friend, my dear Tiberius, from this fatal illuſion! Perſuade him to take a retroſpective view of ſociety in it's primitive ſtate; he will find it divided into three claſſes, and each claſs ſubſiſting in a ſtate of reciprocal aid and dependence. The huſbandman, in the firſt place, employed in the cultivation of the earth, and in extracting from it's boſom all the neceſſaries of life. The artificer, ſecondly, occupied in giving to the materials of the earth their relative forms and fitneſs for uſe. And, thirdly, the ſtateſman de-

* Omnis Ager Siciliæ Decumanus. *Buling. ubi ſupra.*

† Orde. App. De Bello Civ. *Lib.* 5. Pro anni copiâ vel inopiâ, uberius (ex Aſiâ) vel anguſtius vectigal exactum eſt. *Item Dio. Lib.* 5.

‡ The Emperors had impoſed a tax upon urine, duſt, ordure, dead bodies, ſmoke, air, and ſhade. There were alſo rights of turf and ſhorage; duties on wheels, ſhafts, and beaſts of burden; *et quæ alia* (ſays Tacitus) *exactionibus illicitis nomina publicani invenerant.* Vide Buling. ubi ſupra.

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'voting his ſtudies to the arts of government and the protection of ſociety. 'In this fœderal union not one of the 'parties is uſeleſs or inactive; the circle of mutual aſſiſtance is filled up; 'each, according to his faculties, aſſiduouſly contributes his portion; and 'thus Strength, Induſtry and Labour, 'Knowledge, Talents, and Virtue, all 'conſpire to promote the general good. 'To this order of things, ſimple, natural, and regular, as it may appear, is 'the œconomy of a wiſe and equitable 'government reducible.

'You muſt perceive how extremely 'abſurd it muſt be for any one of theſe 'claſſes to deſpiſe the other; you muſt 'ſee that they are all equally uſeful, 'and equally dependent; and that, were 'it poſſible to aſcribe a preference to 'any one, it muſt be given to the huſbandman; for, ſince the ſupport of life 'is the firſt want that man can experience, the art that affords him nouriſhment muſt be the firſt of arts. But, 'as this art is eaſy of attainment, and 'certain in it's operations; as it expoſes 'thoſe who practiſe it to no danger, and 'only requires an exertion of the moſt 'ordinary powers; it is proper that other 'uſeful arts which demand talents, virtues, and the more refined qualities of 'the mind, ſhould meet with greater 'encouragement. For this reaſon the 'moſt neceſſary arts will not be held in 'the higheſt eſtimation, and indeed they 'do not aſpire to it. But though, on 'the one hand, it might be impolitick 'to over-rate them, yet it would be highly unjuſt on the other, and repugnant 'to the intereſts of humanity, to degrade 'them into contempt.

'Let your friend, my dear Tiberius, 'be ſtudiouſly careful not to fall into 'this dangerous error; on the contrary, 'let him cheriſh, as the nurſe of himſelf, 'and of the ſtate, this uſeful though 'deſpiſed claſs of men. It is juſt that 'the people ſhould labour for the two 'other claſſes of ſociety who co-operate with them for the good of the 'whole, and that they ſhould contribute 'to the ſupport of that power which 'forms the defence of the community. 'The earth was deſtined to ſupply the 'nurture of man; but, to thoſe who increaſe it's fertility, the firſt maintenance is due; and, that their induſtry 'may receive no check, the ſtate ſhould 'be careful to impoſe taxes only on 'their ſuperfluities*. If the ſole recompence of hard and unremitting labour was the privilege of leading a 'wretched exiſtence, the cultivators 'of the earth could no longer be deemed a part of the political aſſociation, 'but muſt be ranked with the ſlaves: 'their ſituation would become odious 'and inſupportable; they would fly 'from it with horror, and ſeek for refuge in another claſs; or elſe put a ſtop 'to the propagation of their ſpecies, and 'ſo annihilate their own.'

'It muſt be allowed,' ſaid Juſtinian, 'that they are too much depreſſed; but 'the wants of a race of men who are 'enured to penury and toil are fortunately circumſcribed. Their ambition never aſpires to the poſſeſſion of 'any thing beyond the common neceſſaries of life; give them bread, and they 'are contented.'

'Indeed, my good neighbour,' replied Beliſarius, 'one would imagine that 'you had paſſed your whole life at 'court, you are ſo compleatly verſed in 'the language. What you have been 'now ſaying is continually repeated to 'a ſovereign, that he may be induced to 'pillage his people without mercy, and 'without remorſe. I grant you that 'the people are ſtrangers to thoſe inordinate wants which are created by luxury; but, the more modeſt and frugal 'their way of life, the more they are 'diſtinguiſhed for ſobriety and patience, 'the greater is the certainty, when they 'venture to complain, that their complaints are founded in juſtice. In the 'language of the court, to want the neceſſaries of life, implies the want of 'ability to maintain twenty uſeleſs 'horſes, and as many idle drones in livery. In the honeſt language of the 'artleſs huſbandman, it ſignifies to want 'wherewithal to nouriſh a poor father 'ſinking beneath the weight of years; 'to rear a little helpleſs race of infants, 'whoſe feeble hands are yet unfit for 'work; and to comfort a virtuous wife 'who is either breeding or nurſing a 'new ſubject of the ſtate. In his ſimple 'language, it is to want theſe things; 'and, moreover, to want the proper ſeed 'to depoſit in the earth; a well-ſtored 'granary againſt an unfavourable ſea-

* This was a maxim of Henry the Fourth, of France: it is that of all good kings.

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'ſon, or a year of ſcarcity; and in age, 'and in ſickneſs, the comforts and the 'ſuccours which nature requires.

'Oh! my friend, is it not manifeſt, 'then, that this firſt deſtination of the 'fruits of agriculture ſhould be held 'more ſacred and inviolable than all the 'treaſure in the depoſitories of Janus?'

'Alas!' ſaid the Emperor, 'there 'are times of publick calamity, when 'ſtate-neceſſity requires that induſtry 'itſelf ſhould not be exempt from taxation.'—'Thoſe times,' replied Beliſarius, 'muſt be deſperate indeed, ſince, 'to juſtify the adoption of ſuch an oppreſſive meaſure, all the numerous 'reſources which luxury ſupplies muſt 'have been exhauſted, and no way left 'of ſaving the ſtate but by the ruin of 'the people. For my part, I have never 'ſeen ſuch times*. But let us conſider 'things in their true point of view. 'What is it that occaſions the miſery 'of the lower and moſt induſtrious claſs 'of people? The vicious enjoyments 'of the great, who, while they paſs 'their days in ſloth, and riot in luxury, 'throw the whole burden on the induſtrious huſbandman †. They, whoſe 'wealth enables them to reap the greateſt advantages from the civil union, 'are the men who contribute the leaſt 'to the neceſſary expences of government, and the defence of the ſtate. 'They ſeem to conſider their inutility 'as an honourable privilege, and to regard it as an exemption from national 'impoſts. Obtain the abolition of this 'abuſe; promote an equal diſtribution 'of taxes; let each man's quota of the 'publick expences be proportioned to his 'means and abilities; and the burden 'will appear light to all.'

'What has not been attempted,' ſaid the Emperor, 'to eſtabliſh this juſt equa'lity ſo much deſired‡? Have not thoſe 'faithleſs Decurions who, in the cities 'they were appointed to aſſeſs, over-rated ſome of the inhabitants, in order 'to give undue exemptions to others §, 'been ſentenced to be burnt alive?'

'Alas!' replied Beliſarius, 'I know 'but little mercy is ſhewn to thoſe unhappy wretches; for not exerting ſufficient ſeverity in oppreſſing the people, they are loaded with irons, and 'unmercifully ſcourged, till they are 'reduced, by their ſufferings, to envy 'even the lot of ſlaves ‖. But are there 'rods, dungeons, and tortures, prepared 'for your regents of provinces, your 'proconſuls, and your prefects? Suppoſing there were, of what uſe are 'pains and penalties, while the murmurs of Diſcontent are ſilenced by authority, the mouth of Complaint is 'ſtopped, and the cries of Miſery are 'ſmothered? Relax the ſeverity of 'your laws, and allow the people full 'liberty to proſecute ſuch as dare to 'violate them.'

'In all times,' ſaid Juſtinian, 'have 'the people been allowed the privilege of 'complaint.'

'Yes,' replied Beliſarius, 'they have 'ſo; but the liberty of exerciſing that 'privilege has ever depended on the 'will of their tyrants¶. Have not attempts been made to attach the perſons 'of preſidents and prefects, that cities 'and provinces may be at liberty to appeal to the court for a redreſs of injuries in which thoſe very men were 'either principals or accomplices? And 'could any more certain mode of procuring impunity to offenders have 'been adopted? The laws expreſsly 'enjoin all miniſters of juſtice** to reſiſt every ſpecies of oppreſſion, and 'they are the firſt to exerciſe it themſelves. The laws impoſe a religious

* Marcus Aurelius, in a preſſing exigence, rather than burden the people with additional impoſts, ſold the furniture of the Imperial Palace. *Vaſa aurea, uxoriam ac ſuam ſertam et auream veſtem, multa ornamenta gemmarum; ac per duos continuos menſes venditio habita eſt.* Aurel. Vict.

† Inveniuntur plurimi divitum, quorum tributa populos necant. *Salv. Lib.* 4. Proprietatibus carent (pauperes) et vectigalibus obruuntur. *Idem. Lib.* 5. *de Gub. Dei.*

‡ Cod. Leg. de Annonâ.

§ Cod. Lib. 1. de Cenſib.

‖ Traité de L'Orig. du Gouv. Fr.

¶ Idem.

** Illicitas exactiones, et violentias factas, et extortas metu venditiones, &c. prohibeat Præſes provinciæ. *Pand. Lib.* 1. *Tit.* 18.

'duty upon the governors of provinces *, to protect the weak from the encroachments of the ſtronger; and thoſe very governors are at once ſupplied with the means of exerciſing violence, and even with the power of doing it, under the ſanction of that very law which forbids them †. The laws determine the quantum of the impoſt; but the aſſeſſment is entruſted to Prefects, Proconſuls, and Preſidents ‡, who never fail to find ſome ſpecious pretext for encreaſing the weight of the tax. The laws give a right of citing the creatures of the Prefect § before the Prefect himſelf; but at the ſame time they admit of no appeal from his tribunal ‖ to that of the ſovereign; becauſe, ſay they, the prince promotes none to that dignity but men of approved wiſdom and integrity. Is the prince, then, never liable to be deceived in his choice? The imprudence of entruſting the fate of a nation to the probity of an individual, is ſo groſs and glaring, that Prejudice itſelf cannot offer an argument in it's defence. Juſtinian was aware of this; and, to correct the abuſe, re-eſtabliſhed the Prætors, with ample powers to oppoſe the dangerous depredations of the Prefect ¶. But in doing this he created a new order of tyrants, whoſe reſidence in the provinces ſoon gave an opportunity to corruption to ſpread, as it were by contagion, till they who were intended as guardians to the people became confederates in proſligacy, and increaſed the number of oppreſſive uſurpers. Hence the impunity with which Vice lords it through the empire; and hence the inutility of laws founded in wiſdom and juſtice **.'

'How would you act in ſuch a ſituation?' ſaid the Emperor.'—'I would liſten to the complaints of the injured,' replied Beliſarius, 'and make the ſons of Rapine and Plunder tremble for their guilt.

'Among the inſtitutions of our Emperors, there is one which I reverence, and which I fervently wiſh to ſee reſtored to it's primitive vigour. When, in the number of thoſe to whom the authority of government is delegated, I found a ſet of officers †† ſent into the provinces, with ſpecial powers to hear the complaints of the people, in order to tranſmit an account of their grievances to the Emperor, I felt my ſoul expand with the generous ſpirit of humanity; my prayers are continually offered up to the Gods, that ſome good prince may give to that important office all the weight of dignity which it ought to poſſeſs; that he may nominate to ſo glorious an employment ſuch of his friends as enjoy the greateſt portion of his confidence, and beſt deſerve it by their fidelity and virtue; that, amidſt the aweful pomp of religious ceremony, he may adminiſter, at the foot of the altar, the ſolemn oath by which the choſen patriots ſhall bind themſelves to their ſovereign, their country, and to their God, never to betray the intereſts of the weak and helpleſs to the pride of Arrogance, or the oppreſſions of Power; that he may ſend them every year among his people, under the ſacred name of Guardians; and that, as ſoon as their high commiſſion is executed, he may recal them to his preſence, leſt, expoſed to the attempts of Corruption, their virtue ſhould prove un-

* Ne potentiores viri humiliores injuriis afficiant, ad religionem præſidis provinciæ pertinet. *Ibid*

† Qui univerſas provincias regunt, jus gladii habent. *Ibid.*

‡ Novell. 28.

§ Detoperam judex ut prætorium ſuum ipſe componat. *Cod. Theod. Lib.* i. *Tit.* 10.

‖ Non poteſt à Præfectis Prætorio appellari. Credidit enim princeps eos, qui ob ſingularem induſtriam, exploratâ eorum fide et gravitate, ad ejus officii magnitudinem adhibentur, non aliter judicaturos, pro ſapientiâ ac luce dignitatis, quam ipſe foret judicaturus. *Pand. Lib.* i. *Tit.* 11.

¶ Ut Prætor prohiberet exactores tributorum ſuſcipere & exequi mandata quæ malo more à ſede præfecti exeunt, de muris reficiendis, de viis ſternendis, et aliis oneribus infinitis. *Novell.* 24.

** Vide Pand. Lib. 48. Leg. Jul. repetundarum. Leg. Jul. de Annonâ. Leg. Jul. peculatus. Cod. Theod. Lib. 4. Tit. 12. Cod. Juſt. Lib. 1. De Cenſib. & Cenſit.

†† They were called *Curioſi*.

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'able to withſtand the temptation. 'What a glorious effect would ſuch an 'inſtitution produce! Methinks I now 'behold the intereſting ſcene! See, on 'the arrival of the juſt and upright 'man, how Liberty rears her head in 'the provinces, while Tyranny and Li-'centiouſneſs look abaſhed, and trem-'ble! See your Prefects, your Go-'vernors, your Proconſuls and their 'deputies, turn pale, and ſhrink in the 'preſence of their Judge, who is ſur-'rounded by a grateful crowd of the 'people, and hailed as their father, and 'the avenger of their wrongs! It is 'the general complaint of monarchs, 'that Truth is hidden from their ſight. 'Alas! my worthy friend, ſhe courts 'their view, and even ruſhes into their 'preſence, in ſpite of all the numerous 'obſtacles that oppoſe her paſſage. 'What, then, would be the caſe, could 'ſhe approach without danger or dif-'ficulty—were every avenue open to 'her! No ſeditious tumults of an en-'raged populace would then be heard; 'none but the calm voice of Wiſdom 'and Virtue, bearing to the foot of the 'throne the humble ſupplications of 'Humanity, would then pervade the 'royal ear. How would the number 'of thoſe flagrant abuſes that are daily 'committed in the name of the ſove-'reign be diminiſhed, if thus annu-'ally ſubmitted to the ſevere and vi-'gilant eye of Juſtice, ready from the 'ſummit of the throne to inflict ven-'geance on the guilty!

'Of all ranks in ſociety, the milita-'ry claſs is that where licentiouſneſs 'and diſorder are moſt likely to pre-'vail with impunity; but, let a ſtrict 'and vigorous obſervance of diſcipline 'be enforced; let not the dangerous 'interpoſition of Favour be ſuffered to 'mitigate the wholeſome ſeverity of 'the laws; and a few examples, like 'that which Juſtinian has offered to 'the world, will ſoon reduce the moſt 'daring ſpirits to due obedience.'

'To what example do you allude?' ſaid the Emperor. 'You ſhall hear,' replied Beliſarius: 'It is, in my opi-'nion, the moſt brilliant paſſage of his 'reign. The generals who command-'ed his armies at Colchis, had inhu-'manly maſſacred the King of the 'Lazians, a monarch who was in al-'liance with the Emperor. Juſtinian 'immediately diſpatched Athanaſius, 'one of the moſt diſtinguiſhed ſenators, 'to the place where the murder was 'committed, with full power to enter 'into a ſtrict inveſtigation of the fact; 'and, after a candid and impartial 'hearing, to pronounce judgment, and 'enforce the execution of the ſentence. 'Athanaſius, from whoſe deciſion no 'appeal could be had, conducted this 'important cauſe with all the pomp and 'ſolemnity the occaſion required. On 'one of the ſmaller hills of Caucaſus 'he fixed his tribunal; and there, in the 'preſence of the Lazian army, he 'cauſed the puniſhment of decapitation 'to be inflicted on the murderers of their 'king. But ſuch commiſſions as this 'call for men ſuperior to corruption; 'of which, indeed, the number is woe-'fully diminiſhed; particularly, ſince 'the wretched degradation of the ſe-'nate.'

'What,' ſaid Tiberius, 'are you a 'partizan of that oppreſſive order who, 'while they tyrannize over the bold aſ-'ſertors of their country's rights, crouch 'with ſervility beneath the galling yoke 'of deſpotiſm?'

'When I lament the want of a ſenate,' replied Beliſarius, 'I do not regret what 'it was, but what it might have been. 'All power inclines to tyranny, for 'there is a natural propenſity in the hu-'man mind to ſet up it's own will as 'a law to others. The inflexible pride 'and ſeverity of the Senate inſpired the 'people with a juſt averſion to their go-'vernment, and made them prefer the 'dominion of *one* maſter, whoſe reign, 'they fondly hoped, would be more 'mild and equitable. The ſovereign, 'thus eſtabliſhed, became jealous of the 'unlimited authority entruſted to his 'care; and, in order to ſecure it from 'infringement, reſolved to humble the 'pride of the Senate, and reduce that 'imperious order to obedience; while the 'Senate, ſeized with a panick, evinced 'a degrading ſpirit of ſubmiſſion, that 'even exceeded the wiſhes of their new 'maſter! Tiberius himſelf was aſham-'ed of their ſervility*. But it is eaſy to 'conceive, that the Senate, by ceaſing 'to be dangerous, might become uſeful 'to the publick; that it might give to 'government an air of conſtitutional

* Tacitus. Ann. *Lib.* 1.

'authority; and that, being an intermediate order between the ſovereign and the people, it might ſtrengthen and connect the whole force of the empire. In the want of a ſenate, I regret the loſs of a ſeminary of ſtateſmen, and of heroes, diſtinguiſhed alike in the council and the field, and fully inſtructed in the art of governing by the influence of laws and the neceſſary aid of a military force. It is from this order of men, reſtrained within due limits, and enjoying a juſt portion of publick reſpect, that a ſovereign would be always able to ſelect his generals, his miniſters, his prefects, and his governors. Were there occaſion, at preſent, for a man of wiſdom, virtue, and talents, where could he be found? By what ſymptoms are his abilities and integrity to be known? In order to make a trial of his merit, would the fate of a whole people be entruſted to his care? Is it on the obſcure ſervice of an Imperial militia*, that a Regulus, a Fabius, a Scipio, is to be formed? From want of a publick ſchool, where the faculties of the mind are daily called forth to exertion; where talents are fully diſplayed from a generous ſpirit of emulation; where the true characters of men are diſcloſed; where the powers of Genius are developed; and Wiſdom and Virtue ſtart from obſcurity, and extort the diſtinctions they merit; all honours and rewards are beſtowed as a compliment to the fortuitous advantage of birth, or partially diſtributed to fawning ſycophants by the capricious hand of Court-favour. Hence that accumulation of evils which threaten the ſtate with deſtruction.'

'What would you do,' ſaid the Emperor, 'when men have degenerated; when the whole race is corrupted; and, in ſpite of the moſt ſtrenuous endeavours to ſelect from the general maſs ſome few to whom authority may be delegated without danger, we are miſtaken in our choice? Diſguſt muſt inevitably ſucceed, and we muſt reſign the trouble of ſelection, when ſubject to conſtant diſappointment.'

'Never,' replied Beliſarius, 'ſhould a ſovereign be diſcouraged. Corruption is never univerſal; men of integrity are always to be found; and, if not found, they are to be made. They will be made, if the ſovereign be endued with the love of virtue, and poſſeſſed of penetration to diſtinguiſh it.—Farewel, my friends: the topick I have juſt ſtarted ſhall be diſcuſſed at our next meeting; and it will be a conſolatory inveſtigation, for we ſhall find that the mere will of a ſingle man is ſufficient to remedy the moſt inveterate abuſes.'

'Beliſarius makes every thing depend on the weak will of a Prince,' ſaid Juſtinian to Tiberius. 'But can we give to ourſelves the power of diſcernment, and of making a proper choice? Is he not aware of the ſpecious appearances aſſumed by men for the purpoſe of deception?'

'What embarraſſes me moſt,' ſaid Tiberius, 'is his idea that men are born juſt ſuch as you would wiſh them to be, as if Nature were ſubjected to your authority. Yet Beliſarius has a deep and comprehenſive underſtanding; he has reaped wiſdom from experience; and received inſtructions in the ſchool of Adverſity. His reflections will certainly be worthy our attention.'

CHAP. XIII.

ON their arrival the following day, they found Beliſarius employed, with his man Paulinus, in the cultivation of his garden. 'Had you come a moment ſooner,' ſaid he, 'you would have received, as I myſelf have done, an excellent leſſon in the art of governing; for nothing bears ſo ſtrong a reſemblance to the government of men as the management of plants; and my gardener, there, reaſons on the ſubject like a perfect Solon.'

As the Emperor and Tiberius were walking with the hero, the latter ſtated to him the different reflections they had made, and the reaſons they had to fear that their opinions were all founded on deluſion.

'It is too true,' replied Beliſarius, 'that a Prince, ſurrounded in his palace by a ſtrong circle of courtiers and of

* This nominal militia was compoſed of the civil magiſtrate and the officers of the revenue. The members of the ſenate, too, by the policy of the Emperor, were compelled to ſerve in it.

'flatterers,

'flatterers, will acquire but a very ſlender knowledge of mankind; but what prevents him from burſting through the walls of his priſon, and from being communicative and eaſy of acceſs? The ſovereign who condeſcends to be affable, ſhews that he is earneſt in the purſuit of truth; for though his ſlaves diſguiſe it, the true friend of the people, the honeſt huſbandman, the frank and downright veteran, will not fear to expoſe it to his view in it's native colours. From them he will hear the voice of the publick; that voice, which is the oracle every ſovereign ſhould conſult, the moſt upright and infallible judge of merit and of virtue; and the prince who follows it's deciſion in the ſelection of his miniſters will never have reaſon to be aſhamed of it's choice. But the ſovereign's attention need only be directed to two objects, namely, The counſellors of ſtate, and the agents appointed to enforce the execution of his orders. Let the former be choſen with wiſdom, and I will anſwer for the integrity of the latter: the whole depends upon having near his perſon ſome truſty friends who merit the confidence repoſed in them. Theodoric had but one, the virtuous Caſſiodorus; and the glory of his reign is known to the univerſe. Even at court, believe me, there are not wanting infallible criterions of honour and fidelity. Severity of manners, diſintereſted conduct, ſtrict integrity, the honeſt firmneſs of truth, a generous ardour in the cauſe of innocence, unſhaken conſtancy in friendſhip, a zeal for virtue that no dangers can intimidate, a ſteady attachment to the laws of Equity—theſe are the characteriſtick traits which ſhould direct the choice of a Prince, and in which he may confide without riſk of deception. And it is ſtill more eaſy to diſtinguiſh the men whom he ſhould be ſtudious to avoid; for Virtue may be counterfeit, but Vice is never diſſembled: as ſoon as it appears, you may truſt to it's reality. For example, were I a king, the man who once ſhould dare to talk with contempt of my people, with levity of the duties of my ſtation, or of the abuſe of my power with ſervile complaiſance; that man ſhould be for ever excluded from the number of my friends. And nothing is more eaſy, than, by attentive obſervation, to diſcover certain traits which betray the true character of the man, and diſcloſe his real ſentiments, though diſguiſed by the deepeſt arts of hypocriſy. I have heard much of the ſkilful diſſimulation of courtiers; but there is not one of them more difficult to be known than Candour itſelf; and, ſhould the ſovereign be impoſed upon, the publick voice will undeceive him. Let him, therefore, confine his confidence and eſteem to ſuch as are worthy to enjoy them; and Truth and Virtue having once gained admittance into his councils, will direct him in the choice of his agents, and he will no longer be ſubjected to impoſition.'

'But do you conſider,' ſaid the Emperor, 'what a number of wiſe and virtuous men he will have occaſion for to adminiſter juſtice, and to fill the various offices of government? Where will he be able to find them?'

'Human Nature,' replied Beliſarius, will always ſupply him; direct her gifts to the beſt advantage, and they will never prove deficient.'—'And for that purpoſe,' ſaid Juſtinian, 'are not juſt and ſalutary laws the beſt guides a ſovereign can employ?'—'They will do much,' replied Beliſarius, but not enough; publick manners are exempt from the juriſdiction of the law.'

'How then,' ſaid Juſtinian, 'can law effect a total change of manners, to which time has given a kind of preſcription?'—'My gardener ſhall inform you,' replied Beliſarius. 'Here, Paulinus! When a weed ſhoots up among your plants, what do you do?'—'I pull it up by the root,' anſwered the honeſt gardener. 'Why don't you cut it, inſtead of pulling it up by the roots?'—'Becauſe it would ſprout again in a ſhort time, and then there would be no end of the trouble. Beſides, good Sir, it is the root which abſorbs the juice of the earth, and that it is our buſineſs to prevent.'—'You hear him,' ſaid Beliſarius; 'his doctrine, applied to your laws, would prove equally ſound. They retrench, indeed, as much as poſſible, the crimes of ſociety; but the vices that give birth to thoſe crimes are ſuffered to exiſt, whereas they ought to be eradicated. Nor is that impoſſible; for almoſt every vice, at leaſt of thoſe which grow at court, have one common root.'—

'And

—'And what is that, pray,' ſaid Tiberius. 'Inordinate deſire,' replied Beliſarius; 'and, whether that deſire be 'underſtood to import Avarice, that delights to hoard; or Rapacity, that loves 'to ſquander; there is nothing ſordid and 'baſe but what it gives birth to. Inhumanity, Fraud, Ingratitude, Treachery, Malice, and Envy, are the ramifications of this paſſion, which is rooted in Meanneſs and Cruelty. With the 'product of it's depredations, it ſupports 'a life of voluptuous diſſipation, and 'profligate debauchery. Thus the love 'of wealth effects a total corruption of 'publick manners. If Avarice inſpire 'the human mind with projects of ambition, ſhe will urge it to accompliſh 'them by Perfidy and Fraud; if ſhe excites Courage, ſhe diſhonours it by 'Cruelty. The moſt brilliant talents are 'by Avarice tinged with the ſtain of 'Venality; and the man who is a ſlave 'to that dangerous paſſion, is continually expoſed to ſale, to be bought by the 'higheſt bidder. From this contaminated ſource, this fatal deſire of amaſſing wealth, ſpring all the crimes that 'diſturb the community. Of this vice, 'by whoſe tyranny the whole world is 'afflicted, Luxury is the parent; for 'Luxury engenders Want, from Want is 'Avarice derived, and from Avarice Oppreſſion: it is evident, therefore, that, 'to effect a revolution in the publick 'manners, you muſt begin with the deſtruction of Luxury.'—'But to attack 'Luxury,' ſaid the Emperor, 'would 'be attacking an Hydra; one head is 'no ſooner ſtricken off, than a thouſand ſpring up in it's place. Or it may 'be more juſtly compared to a Proteus, 'which eludes the chains that are attempted to be impoſed on it, by the aſſumption of different forms. I will go 'farther,' ſaid the Emperor. 'The 'cauſes and the effects of Luxury, it's 'connections and it's intereſts, form, 'in my opinion, ſuch a complicated 'mixture of good and evil, that, admitting the poſſibility of either reſtraining 'or deſtroying it, I much doubt whether the former would be endured, or 'the latter productive of real utility.'

'I grant you,' replied Beliſarius, 'that Luxury in the ſtate is like a ſet of 'deſigning men, ſupported by powerful 'connections; they are at firſt countenanced, from motives of policy; and 'at length confined, as enemies to the 'ſtate. I ſhall not, however, go ſo far: 'let us begin with the facts, for the veracity of which I have had the teſtimony of my own ſenſes. It is ſaid 'that Luxury is productive of great 'advantages in capital cities. I cannot 'believe it; but, be that as it may, I am 'certain it is highly pernicious in a 'camp. When Pompey obſerved the 'troops of Cæſar living wholly upon 'wild roots, he exclaimed—"*They "are brute beaſts*;" he ſhould have 'ſaid—"*They are men.*" The firſt 'duty of a general is to expoſe his life; 'the ſecond to confine his wants to the 'narrow limits preſcribed by Nature; 'and this laſt, to the man who is 'enervated by voluptuous enjoyments, 'will prove the moſt painful taſk. A 'people who ſeek to unite the delights 'of peace with the hardſhips of war, 'will prove incapable to bear with dignity and moderation either the ſmiles 'or frowns of Fortune. Conqueſt alone 'is unable to ſatisfy their wiſhes, unleſs 'accompanied with abundance; if Plenty fails, Victory will loſe it's charms, 'and the proſpect of obtaining it no 'longer excite them to courageous 'exertions. A camp in which Sobriety 'and Temperance prevail, is ever on the 'wing; while the army infected by 'Luxury becomes enervated, ſpiritleſs, 'and inactive. By Temperance, all the 'advantages of internal ſtrength and 'outward reſource are cheriſhed and 'maintained; whereas Prodigality drains 'them to the utmoſt; leaves not one remaining for the hour of urgent neceſſity; and by deva ſtation, famine, diſmay, and ſhameful flight, bring the 'war to a baſe and diſhonourable concluſion. To a people nurſed in the 'lap of Luxury, every enterprize appears painful and difficult of accompliſhment: their courage, indeed, may 'ſtill remain, but they want power to 'exert it. The enemy that knows how 'to *fatigue* need not endeavour to *vanquiſh* them; and the *delays* of war will 'prove as deciſive as the moſt deſperate *actions*.

'But Luxury does more than ſimply 'enervate the body; it's baneful influence is extended to every faculty of 'the mind, which it ſoftens and corrupts. The man of wealth and affluence, who leads Pleaſure and Luxury in his train, diffuſes a contagion 'through the camp, and inſpires the ſol-

'dier

'dier of fortune with a dangerous ſpirit 'of emulation: the latter, aſhamed to be 'outdone by his equal in military rank, 'becomes his rival in profligacy; and, 'to ſupport the degrading competition, 'has even recourſe to diſhonour. Eſteem 'and reſpect are confined to riches and 'magnificence; while Poverty is loaded 'with contempt, and humble Merit 'ſinks, abaſhed by Ridicule; then fol-'lows Perdition, compleat and inevi-'table. Such are the effects of Luxury, 'which I have witneſſed myſelf.'

'I well know,' ſaid Tiberius, 'that 'you baniſhed it from your armies; but 'pray, how did you accompliſh it?'—'Without the ſmalleſt difficulty,' repli-ed Beliſarius. 'I firſt expelled it from 'my own tent, and then treated it with 'the moſt ſovereign contempt wherever 'I found it. Againſt the venom of 'Pride, Contempt is a powerful anti-'dote. I had learned that a young A-'ſiatick had introduced into my camp 'all the effeminate indulgences of his 'own country; that he ſlept beneath a 'purple canopy, and drank out of gol-'den goblets; that his table was ſerved 'with the moſt luxurious diſhes, and 'the moſt exquiſite wines. I invited 'him to dine with me; and, in the pre-'ſence of his comrades—"Young "man," ſaid I, "you ſee that our fare "is but homely, and we are ſometimes "worſe ſerved: and it is what we have "to expect; for they who preſs for-"ward in the race of glory, are ever "ſubject to want bread. Believe me, "the hardſhips to which you would be "inevitably expoſed in the hardy life "we lead, would prove too painful for "your delicacy to ſupport; I would ad-"viſe you, therefore, to quit the army." 'My reproach had the deſired effect; 'he apologized for his paſt conduct, and 'diſmiſſed his retinue.'—'And was 'this leſſon ſufficient?' ſaid Tiberius. 'Doubtleſs it was,' replied Beliſa-rius; 'for my own example gave weight 'to my precepts, and I was known to be 'reſolute.'—'Your conduct muſt have 'excited great complaints.'—'When 'law is founded on expedience, and ad-'miniſtered with equality, obedience en-'ſues without a murmur.'—'Very true; 'but it is hard for the rich to be reduced 'to a level with the poor.'—'In return, 'however, it is pleaſing to the poor to 'be raiſed to a par with the rich; and, in 'every place of the globe, the poor are 'the moſt numerous.'—'But, at court, 'the rich are the moſt powerful, and com-'mand the greateſt attention.'—'Tis 'true; and they profited by that ad-'vantage to effect my ruin. But 'what I did then, I would do again; 'for I am convinced that the vigour of 'the mind, like that of the body, pro-'ceeds from temperance; without which 'there is no diſintereſtedneſs, there is 'no virtue. I once aſked a ſhepherd 'why his dogs were ſo faithful? "Be-"cauſe," ſaid he, "they live on bread; "if I had given them fleſh to eat, they "would have been mere wolves." I 'was much ſtricken with his anſwer. 'In general, my friend, the ſureſt way 'to check the progreſs of Vice, is to re-'ſtrain the gratification of all ſuperflu-'ous wants.'

'All this is very practicable in an 'army,' ſaid the Emperor, 'but utter-'ly impoſſible in a ſtate. Between ci-'vil inſtitutions and military laws there 'is a wide difference: by the latter, 'Liberty is greatly abridged; it is con-'fined within very narrow limitations. 'No law whatever can prevent a citi-'zen from acquiring riches by fair and 'honeſt means; nor, when wealth is 'thus obtained, can any law deprive him 'of the free diſpoſal, or the quiet en-'joyment, of it. It is regarded either 'as the fruit of his induſtry, his labour, 'and his talents; or elſe the lawful 'gains of his anceſtors. He has an 'equal right to diſſipate his fortune like 'a ſpendthrift, or to hoard it as a mi-'ſer.'—'Granted,' ſaid Beliſarius. 'I will venture ſtill farther,' purſued the Emperor. 'If the riches of a ſtate 'are monopolized by a particular claſs 'of men, it is proper they ſhould be 'diffuſed; that Induſtry and Labour 'ſhould draw them from the hands of 'Sloth.'—'In that, alſo, I agree with 'you,' replied Beliſarius.'—'Let me 'add,' continued Juſtinian, 'that 'Senſuality, Oſtentation, Effeminacy, 'the Caprice of Taſte, the Coquetry of 'Faſhion, the Refinements of Luxury 'and Vanity, are trifling blemiſhes, that 'are connived at by the police of every 'country, and of which no laws can 'take cognizance without becoming 'tyrannical.'—'God forbid!' ſaid Be-liſarius, 'that the laws ſhould take 'notice of them.'—'You now ſee, 'then,' replied the Emperor, 'that 'Luxury is protected by all that is 'deemed

'deemed ſacred and inviolable amongſt 'men; by Liberty, Property, and perhaps alſo by publick Utility.'—'I acknowledge the juſtice of all your obſervations, except the laſt,' ſaid Beliſarius.'—'But,' ſaid the Prince, 'you will allow that Luxury gives life and vigour to the Arts; that it inſpires mankind with a ſpirit of induſtry, activity, and emulation; and that it oppoſes the progreſs of Indolence, and the love of Idleneſs, by offering new incentives of deſire, artificial wants, and ſtudied gratifications.'

'I grant,' ſaid Beliſarius, 'that Luxury has charms for thoſe who have power to enjoy it; is profitable to ſuch as are employed to procure the enjoyments it affords; and that the Prince ought to ſuffer this ſpecies of commerce to remain free and uninterrupted. Is not that what you contend for?'

'I contend for ſomething more,' replied the Emperor; 'I maintain that it's advantages extend to every claſs of men, from the higheſt to the loweſt; that even the labourer experiences it's ſalutary effects, by finding, through the means of Luxury, a more ready and profitable ſale for the produce of his induſtry and toil.'—'It is upon this point,' ſaid Beliſarius, 'that you are deceived by appearances: for whatever the prodigality of the ſpendthrift beſtows on the labouring man, only returns to that ſource from whence it originally ſprung; and all the intermediate poſſeſſors muſt be conſidered as drones who ſubſiſt on the labour of others. Recollect the ideas we formed of the primitive ſtate of ſociety. What is it's object! Is it not to render man uſeful to man? And, in that ſyſtem, is not the right which one individual has to the produce of another's labours, founded on reciprocal conditions? If, therefore, a man keeps a thouſand of his fellow-creatures continually employed in the gratification of his wants, without contributing himſelf even to the neceſſities of one, muſt he not be conſidered as a barren and voracious plant in the midſt of a corn field? Such is the man of wealth, who waſtes his time in idleneſs and luxury; the induſtrious part of ſociety are continually at work for him, while he carelesly receives their tribute, as the homage that is due to him. All Nature 'ſeems occupied in flattering his taſte, 'in adminiſtering to his deſires: for him 'only do the Seaſons produce the moſt 'delicious fruits; the Elements ſupply 'the moſt exquiſite viands; and the Arts, 'the moſt finiſhed maſter-pieces of human exertion. He enjoys all, without conducing in the ſmalleſt degree 'to any ſalutary end; he ſteals from Society a number of it's moſt uſeful 'members, without performing the duties of any; and dies, at laſt, without 'leaving any void, except that occaſioned by the good things which he 'has conſumed.'

'I will not be poſitive,' ſaid Tiberius; 'but to me it appears, that he is 'not ſo burdenſome to ſociety, nor ſo 'uſeleſs, as you repreſent him: for, if he 'does not contribute the fruits of his 'own talents, his labours or his induſtry, to the common fund, he throws 'in his money, which amounts to the 'ſame thing.'

'Hold, my friend,' ſaid Beliſarius, 'money is a mere ſymbol of valuation; 'a general ſtandard, denoting the worth 'of the goods we receive, and a pledge 'for the return of them. It anſwers 'the purpoſe of natural commerce, and 'gives facility to traffick between man 'and man; but he who, in the courſe of 'that traffick, gives only the ſymbol, and 'never ſupplies the reality, takes an unfair advantage of the laws of commutation, to obtain the ceſſion of 'what he never intends to replace. The 'pawn which he depoſits operates as a 'diſpenſation, inſtead of a confirmation 'of the natural contract. Let the magiſtrate exert his vigilance, let the ſoldier fight, and the labourer toil, for 'him; his right to their joint ſervices is 'annually renewed, and his privilege 'of living an uſeleſs member of ſociety 'is ſtamped upon his gold.'

'By this means,' ſaid Tiberius, 'Opulence keeps the whole world in 'pay.'—'Even ſo, my young friend,' replied Beliſarius; 'and the rich man 'is freed from all troubling fatigue, except that of paying to ſociety the wages 'of ſervitude.'—'And why does this 'ſervitude ſubſiſt?' enquired Tiberius. 'Why are rich men tolerated in a ſtate?' —'Becauſe,' ſaid Beliſarius, 'the laws 'enſure to each individual the quiet poſſeſſion of the property he has acquired; 'becauſe

'because the beſt acquiſitions are the 'fruits of induſtry, labour, and know-'ledge; becauſe to the right of acquir-'ing the privilege of accumulating is 'annexed; and becauſe property, like 'liberty, is a civil right that ſhould never 'be violated*. It is, doubtleſs, an evil, 'that there ſhould be men who have the 'privilege of throwing the whole bur-'den of their own exiſtence, and that of 'their train, upon the community; but 'it would be a ſtill greater evil to 'damp the ſpirit of emulative in-'duſtry, by deſtroying the hopes of poſ-'ſeſſion, and the certainty of enjoyment. 'Do not, therefore, complain of an evil 'that cannot be avoided. So long as men 'are to be found, in induſtry, œcono-'my, and good fortune, ſuperior to their 'fellow-citizens, ſo long will an un-'equal diſtribution of property ſubſiſt; 'and the more flouriſhing the ſtate 'of the nation, the greater will that in-'equality be; yet, however exceſſive, the 'legiſlature can have no right to deſtroy 'it.'

'You muſt own, then,' ſaid the Em-peror, 'that luxury is productive of 'ſome good; ſince, by it's expences, 'it promotes the diminution, nay, 'the very annihilation of the inequa-'lity complained of. In other words, 'luxury bears in it's very exiſtence 'a principle of ſelf-deſtruction.'—'I acknowledge it,' ſaid Beliſarius, 'and am willing that riches ſhould be 'allowed every poſſible means of circu-'lation. I do not mean to contend that 'the man of opulence ſhould be com-'pelled to hoard his treaſures, nor be 'reſtrained from the free enjoyment of 'them. I have already ſaid, that the 'laws ought to confine themſelves to 'providing for the neceſſities of the 'ſtate, by a fair exaction of equal im-'poſts; this proviſion ſhould be derived 'from the ſuperfluity of the ſubject, who 'ſhould be ſuffered to enjoy in tran-'quillity, and wholly exempt from con-'troul, that portion of his property which 'is requiſite for his own ſubſiſtence. 'Opinion will do the reſt.'—'Opinion!' ſaid the Emperor. 'Yes, Opinion,' replied Beliſarius; 'that, and that only, 'without conſtraint and violence, will 'replace every thing in it's proper 'ſtation: and it is thence alone 'we muſt expect a revolution in the 'manners.

'Such a revolution appears difficult 'to you, but it depends entirely on the 'will and example of the ſovereign. 'When, in a competition for princely 'favour, where either party, in point of 'merit, has equal claim to protection, 'the man who is moſt diſtinguiſhed for 'modeſty of conduct and ſimplicity of 'manners ſhall obtain the preference; 'when the ſovereign ſhall proclaim his 'contempt of oſtentatious expence and 'enervating luxury; ſhall look with diſ-'dain on the ſlaves of voluptuouſneſs, 'and receive with chearfulneſs and re-'ſpect the men who labour for the pub-'lick good—then will the court contract 'a laudable taſte for ſimplicity, enno-'bled by wiſdom and œconomy. Often-'ſtation, far from being honourable, 'will not be even decent; licentiouſneſs 'and frivolity will give way to purity 'and auſterity of manners; perſonal 'merit will be alone able to command 'reſpect; and luxury and vanity will be 'left to enjoy the empty pleaſures of 'ſelf-applauſe. Oh! my friends, how 'rapid would be their fall! You know 'the docile attention of the metropolis, 'it's promptitude to follow the example 'of the court; that which is honourable 'ſoon becomes faſhionable. The fru-'gality of our anceſtors once reſtored, 'Diſintereſtedneſs would ſoon follow, 'and bring heroick manners in her 'train. The man of ability to be uſe-'ful, perceiving extravagance no lon-'ger in vogue, and releaſed from the 'debaſing wants of luxury, would ſoon 'find the ſentiments of honour taking 'root in his heart. With a mind free as 'air, and proud of it's liberty, he 'would breathe the pure ſpirit of pa-'triotiſm; an ardour for glory would 'fire his boſom, and a generous emu-'lation would ſtrengthen the flame. 'Alas! did the ſovereign but know his 'aſcendant over the minds of men, with 'what extreme facility he can mould 'them to his will, with what ſatisfac-'tion would he exert this moſt enviable 'portion of his prerogative! Of all the

* A philoſopher at Athens having found a treaſure that had been hidden in a field, wrote to the Emperor Trajan---'*I have found a treaſure.*' Trajan anſwered, that he had nothing to do but *to make uſe* of it. '*It is too great for a philoſopher,*' replied the other. 'Then *make a bad uſe* of it,' ſaid the Emperor. Alexander Severus thought the ſame.

'powers he enjoys, this is the moſt irreſiſtible, and yet it is the only one which 'he is not conſcious of poſſeſſing.'

'And what power,' ſaid Juſtinian, 'is adequate to controul a taſte for 'amuſement! the love of pleaſure, and 'the luſt of money? To the man whoſe 'ſenſes are drowned in voluptuous enjoyments, the cenſure and commendation of the court is alike indifferent. 'Can a ſovereign prevent ſuch a man 'from commanding at his pleaſure an 'induſtrious people, who are ever eager 'to adminiſter to his wants? Can he 'hinder him from being encompaſſed 'with delights? from rendering the 'arts ſubſervient to his own gratifications?'—'No,' replied Beliſarius; 'but, if the ſovereign chuſes, he can 'brand effeminacy with ſhame, and 'ſloth with contempt; he can exclude 'indolence, vice and incapacity, however ſtrongly ſupported by wealth, 'from the firſt offices of the ſtate; he 'can make the true comforts of life, 'and every rational enjoyment, the ſure 'attendants of a fair character, and attainable only by merit; he can, at 'leaſt, take from Luxury all it's pride 'and conſequence. This alone will be 'ſufficient; for, when Luxury is once 'humbled, Indigence will no longer be 'depreſſed, nor Virtue eclipſed. There 'will be other rewards, of which riches 'can never be the ſubſtitute. The gratitude and eſteem of the publick, honours and dignities, will be reſerved 'for merit; gold will no longer be able 'to hide the ſhame of infamy, and baſeneſs of ſoul will no longer be concealed 'beneath the ſplendour of arrogant oſtentation. Believe me, my friends, take 'Pride from Luxury, and you deprive 'it of it's chief enjoyments. It's moſt 'refined ſenſations are affected; and it's 'vain and fantaſtick pleaſures derive their 'principal energy from publick opinion. 'Subdue that opinion, you will reduce 'riches to their true ſtandard; and, if 'the man who is poſſeſſed of them be 'anxious to acquire honour and eſteem, 'he will be careful to make a proper 'uſe of them. Luxury is the moſt effectual bar to generoſity; it's wants are 'productive of avarice, and that avarice is a mixture of all thoſe paſſions 'whoſe gratification may be procured by 'gold. But, if the moſt ardent of theſe 'paſſions, ſuch as pride, ambition, and 'even Love itſelf—for love is ever attendant on glory—be no longer attached to magnificence and oſtentation, you may then judge how conſiderably the attractions of luxury and 'the force of avarice are diminiſhed.

'The real advantages of wealth, ſuch 'as eaſe, convenience, the delights of 'plenty, independence and repoſe, and 'that empire which the man of opulence aſſerts over a crowd of retainers; 'all theſe are more than ſufficient to 'make a powerful impreſſion on little 'minds; and I am very far from either 'hoping or fearing the deſtruction of 'arts which are nouriſhed by riches. 'But, if honours and preferments be no 'longer deemed the inſeparable appendages of wealth, ſouls endued by 'nature with energy and ſpirit, ſouls 'ſuſceptible of generous paſſions and 'exalted virtues, will no longer look 'down with contempt on the trivolous 'enjoyments of vanity, and ſeek elſewhere for glory and for fame.'

'In an opulent empire,' ſaid Tiberius, 'the place of wealth will never be 'eclipſed by the barren ſplendour of 'unprofitable honours. The eyes of 'mankind are only to be dazzled by 'the luſtre of riches; and dignities, nay 'majeſty itſelf, is obliged to have recourſe to it for it's moſt ſtriking ornaments.'

'Whether, in your opinion,' replied Beliſarius, 'did the rich Lucullus, or 'the indigent Cato, give the greateſt 'dignity, the greateſt majeſty, to the 'Roman Senate?' This queſtion confuſed Tiberius. 'I now ſpeak,' purſued the hero, 'of a time in which 'luxury prevailed; and, even in that 'time, with what veneration did the 'moſt ſound part of the ſtate—I mean, 'the people—recal to their minds the 'glorious days when Rome was free, 'was virtuous, and was poor; when 'her ſcanty domains were cultivated by 'the hands of the conqueror, and the 'plough was crowned with laurel. Do 'juſtice to the people, and reſt aſſured, 'that a wiſe monarch, encircled by 'generals and miniſters, devoid of 'oſtentation, but loaded with years and 'honours, will exhibit a more pleaſing 'ſpectacle than a voluptuous prince ſurrounded by a train of brilliant courtiers. Men in place, who are anxious to receive honours without the 'trouble of deſerving them, are eternally inculcating the maxim, that 'pomp and magnificence are indiſpenſably requiſite to enſure reſpect; and,

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'in fact, they may be conſidered as a garment, the amplitude of which ſerves to conceal the defects of the body: but this furniſhes an additional reaſon why ſuch ornaments as tend to diſguiſe the objects they embelliſh, and to impoſe on the judgment of mankind, ſhould be wholly thrown aſide. When dignified Virtue ſhall diſplay itſelf to publick view, like a gladiator in the amphitheatre, her ſtrength and beauty will be better diſtinguiſhed; and if Vice, Meanneſs, and Incapacity, dare to ſhew themſelves, they will be covered with greater confuſion.'

'Another advantage reſulting from ſimplicity of manners among the great, is the exemption of the ſtate from the ruinous expences of uſeleſs decorations and the conſequent ſubſtitution of honorary rewards. A judicious diſtribution of honours affords an ample equivalent for the moſt magnificent preſents; and the prince who is juſtly ſparing of his favours, will be equally frugal of the publick wealth. That is the great end he ſhould have in view. To reſtrain the rich from luxurious enjoyments, is not the point; Luxury is a fire that ſpeedily conſumes it's own vitals. The grand object is, to preſerve *thoſe* from yielding to the dangerous allurements of luxury, and the powerful attractions of wealth, who, having only their talents, their knowledge, and their virtue, to depend on, might be tempted to expoſe them to ſale. For this purpoſe, it will be neceſſary to reſerve for them ſuch glorious diſtinctions as no time can efface, and as are not ſubject to profanation. I have ſerved my prince with becoming zeal, and with conſiderable ſucceſs; and I know, from my own feelings, how vile a thing is gold, compared to the oaken bough and the laurel, when they are the ſacred pledge of princely gratitude and eſteem! That eſteem, then, ſo truly grateful to the ſoul, when ſeconded by the voice of publick approbation, the prince ſhould be careful to reſerve for actions of real worth and utility, and ſteadily to with-hold from enterprizes that are vain, frivolous, or dangerous. Such is the princcipal œconomy he ſhould be ſtudious to maintain: but this demands a firm, unſhaken conſtancy of mind; a ſpirit of equity, conſtantly on it's guard againſt ſurprize and ſeduction; a determination of the will that never fluctuates, but ever excludes the hope that continued ſupplication may ſoften it into compliance. Theſe neceſſary qualifications will inevitably be obtained, if the breaſt of the ſovereign be animated with a real love of virtue; and, in that caſe, his opinion will be the opinion of the publick, and his example will decide the national character.'

'Shall I frankly confeſs,' ſaid Tiberius, 'one objection which your arguments have not removed? The court, from whence you are anxious to diſcard favour, intrigue, and luxury, will probably become too gloomy; and a youthful prince——' 'Oh! I underſtand you, you are afraid that he would want amuſement; but recollect, my dear friend, I have repreſented the taſk of governing as a mere paſtime. Still, however, in the midſt of his ſolicitudes, the ſovereign may experience ſome moments of the pureſt enjoyment. The miniſter, for inſtance, may report to him the progreſs of agriculture, in provinces which formerly wore a barren appearance; and he will then ſay to himſelf—"An act "of my will has now produced the happineſs of thouſands!" When his magiſtrates ſhall inform him, that, by one of his laws, the inheritance of an orphan has been reſcued from the griping hand of Avarice, he will then exclaim, "Heaven be praiſed! In me the feeble "have found ſupport." His generals, indeed, will not afford him ſuch good conſolation. But, when he ſhall hear from them, with what zeal and ardour his faithful ſubjects have ſhed their blood in defence of their king and country, his regret for the loſs of ſuch as have died in ſo glorious a cauſe, will be mingled with ſentiments of love and gratitude, that will moiſten his cheeks with the tears of ſenſibility: in ſhort, the vows and prayers of his people, and the bleſſings of future ages, which conſcious imagination will anticipate, conſtitute the true pleaſures of royalty. If this ſhould not prove a ſufficient fund of amuſement, he may viſit, like the ancient kings of Perſia, the different provinces of his empire, diſtributing rewards to ſuch as promote agriculture and induſtry, plenty and population; and depoſing

'all those whose pride, indolence, or severity, shall have produced a contrary effect. At Byzantium, as well as at Rome, the Emperors have taken upon themselves the care of examining the publick granaries: would it be an object less worthy their attention, to make a progress through the country, and enquire whether, beneath the humble shed of the peasant, bread has not been wanting for his helpless children? Oh! how uninstructed must that prince be in regard to his interest and his duty, who can suffer a vacancy in his time! You must not imagine that a sovereign, in the few moments of tranquillity which the duties of his station permit him to enjoy, should refuse to partake of the sweets of friendship. He will have his friends, and with them will taste the charms of social bliss. The man of virtue, whose wants are but few, and therefore easily satisfied, displays in his conversation a smiling serenity, that springs from peace of mind; to which Ostentation, continually importuned by craving Desires, and Vice, goaded by Remorse, are utter strangers. An honest mind, entrusted with an important place, can certainly have but little time for relaxation; yet the few moments it enjoys are delicious; they are neither disturbed by reproach, by fear, or by ambition. The court, where Innocence, Integrity, Truth, and Zeal for the publick welfare, may walk secure, without fearing the secret malice of Envy, or apprehending any sudden disgrace from the caprice of the sovereign, will not, perhaps, be the most brilliant court, but it will be the happiest in the world.'—'It will not be *crouded*,' said the Emperor. 'Why not?' replied Belisarius; 'a few idle slaves of ambition, a few voluptuous cowards, will keep at a distance; but, to recompense that loss, men of probity, and of useful talents, will flock to it in crowds; I say *in crowds*, my friend Tiberius; and I say it in honour of human nature. When Virtue is held in esteem, it will naturally find a residence in every bosom.

'Publick estimation is like a sun in the moral world, that warms, that animates, and calls forth the latent principles of truth and honour. When the mind is depressed by sloth and languor, it is impossible to trace it's real character. Is it to be expected, that a young man, whose father has only taught him to covet the possession of riches; who has seen that opulence forms the sole theme of commendation, the only subject of envy; who has from his infancy witnessed, as well in cities as in villages, the universal contempt in which labour and industry are held; who knows from experience, that rank can descend to meanness; that law will occasionally bend; the road to honours be thrown open, the gates of Favour disclosed, to the sons of Fortune; that Riches alone can secure impunity to Vice, and dignify Baseness; that they can supply the place of Talents, Knowledge, and Virtue—Is it to be expected, I say, that a young man, who has imbibed those ideas, shall be able to enforce the necessary discrimination between that which is merely sanctioned by custom, and that which is intrinsically useful? But, let Opinion change; let the sovereign, who is the sole arbiter of their manners, set the example; let Education and Custom impress the necessity of self-approbation, and teach the true value of publick applause; let the soul expatiate abroad to collect the suffrages of the present age, and to secure the praise of future times; let a fair reputation be deemed the highest good next to virtue; let zeal for the moral character make honour dearer than life, and shame more dreadful than annihilation; let these principles be once established, and it will soon be found how feeble is the influence of sordid views and mean desires.

'Oh! my friend, where now would be the names of Decius, Regulus, and Cato, had they not been men whose enlightened souls were animated by glory and virtue? But, to excite an emulation of their examples, an institution must be raised on the basis of Wisdom, and affording real encouragement to the human mind. It would be vain and ridiculous to order the fathers of families to bring up their children in the paths of Virtue, if Virtue herself lay neglected and forgotten; and if Vice, decked with the honours due only to her, were privileged to insult her. For the re-establishment of good order, therefore, it will be necessary to appropriate to

'Virtue

'Virtue all the ſolid enjoyments of life; 'to allot Evil as the portion of Iniquity; 'and to aſſign every advantage to Juſ- 'tice and to Honour. By the adoption 'of this ſyſtem, you will eaſily conceive 'how the Manners would ſecond the 'Laws, and Opinion ſupply the place 'of Coercion. Hopes and Fears, Re- 'wards and Puniſhments, Enjoyments 'and Privations—theſe are the weights 'that Policy ſhould throw with judg- 'ment into the ſcale of Liberty: by 'that means the world may be go- 'verned at diſcretion.

'But, to ſtick more cloſely to the 'point, The oſtentatious manners of 'the great render them unjuſt and ava- 'ricious; whereas the adoption of ſimple 'manners would be productive of Ge- 'neroſity, Moderation, and Humanity; 'and thus the leading intereſt of Vice 'being liſted on the ſide of Virtue, men 'would adopt the latter from the ſame 'ſpirit that attached them to the for- 'mer.'

'This is a glorious dream!' ſaid Juſtinian. 'Far from it,' replied Be- liſarius. 'To make Intereſt and Self- 'love the chief ſprings of human ac- 'tions, is by no means a dream. Do 'you recollect by what means, in the 'infancy of the republick, that ſenate 'was formed, in which ſuch aſtoniſh- 'ing examples of virtue, ſuch ſplendid 'acts of heroiſm, were diſplayed to the 'admiring world? To what, think 'you, was it owing? It was becauſe, 'at that time, there was nothing at 'Rome ſuperior to greatneſs of ſoul. 'It was becauſe publick eſteem and 'veneration were attached to honeſty 'and virtue, and glory was the hero's 'ſure reward. Such, in all ages, have 'been the great ſprings of the human 'heart.

'I am well aware that habits con- 'firmed by time, (and more particularly 'the habit of tyranny) do not yield, 'without much reſiſtance, even to the 'moſt powerful motives: but, for one 'man whoſe ſpirit of rapine and in- 'juſtice would hold out againſt the fear 'of ſhame, diſgrace, and contempt, 'there are thouſands who would be 'induced, from this ſalutary reſtraint, 'joined to the ſtrong incentive of glory, 'to walk in the ſtraight paths of ho- 'nour and of virtue. To purſue this 'idea, then, I ſuppoſe that men of vir- 'tue are placed at the helm of govern- 'ment; in that caſe, I will anſwer with 'my life for the obedience, fidelity, and 'zeal, of a people who are no longer 'bent beneath the yoke of oppreſſion, 'nor harraſſed by the tyranny of mi- 'niſters, but fully protected by the 'laws in the free enjoyment of their 'lives, their liberty, and their pro- 'perty. The Empire, then, begins to 'raiſe it's head; concord is reſtored to 'all claſſes of the community; the plan 'of Conſtantine, built on a ſandy bot- 'tom, acquires a more ſolid founda- 'tion; and, from publick felicity, I 'ſee ſpring up courage, emulation, 'vigour, and a ſpirit of patriotiſm, 'that brings with it that weight among 'the nations which made Rome the 'miſtreſs of the world.'

While Beliſarius was thus ſpeaking, Juſtinian contemplated, in ſilent admi- ration, the enthuſiaſtick ardour with which the good old man, forgetting the infirmities of age, his miſeries, and the cruel ſtate to which he was reduced, triumphed in the bare idea of rendering his country flouriſhing and happy. 'It is generous,' ſaid the Emperor, 'to feel ſo warm a concern for an un- 'grateful people.'—'My friends,' re- plied the hero, 'I ſhould bleſs that, as 'the moſt glorious day of my life, on 'which I ſhould be thus accoſted— "*Beliſarius, we are now going to open "all your veins; but the price of your "blood will be the accompliſhment of "all your wiſhes."

His amiable daughter, Eudoxa, now came to inform him that his ſupper was ready. He went in, and ſeated himſelf at table. Eudoxa, with a graceful air of modeſty, mingled with dignity, placed before him a plate of vegetables, and ſeated herſelf at his ſide. 'What, is 'that all your ſupper?' ſaid the Empe- ror, with confuſion. 'It is,' replied Beliſarius. 'Such was the frugal repaſt 'of Fabricius; and Fabricius was, at 'leaſt, my equal.'

'Let us depart,' ſaid Juſtinian to Tiberius; 'the contemplation of ſuch 'an object covers me with ſhame.'

His courtiers, in hopes of diſſipating that melancholy which they had per-

* Dum nullum faſtidiretur genus, in quo eniteret virtus, crevit imperium Romanum. *Tit. Liv. Lib.* 4.

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ceived of late to have diffuſed itſelf over the mind of the Emperor, had prepared a ſcene of feſtivity. He did not condeſcend to honour it with his preſence.

At table, his thoughts were wholly occupied by the ſupper of Beliſarius: and, as he withdrew, he ſaid to himſelf, 'Beliſarius is leſs wretched than I am, for he retires to reſt without experiencing the pangs of remorſe.'

CHAP. XIV.

'I Live but in his preſence,' ſaid the Emperor to Tiberius, the following evening, as they were on their way to reviſit the hero. 'The compoſure and ſerenity of his mind transfuſe themſelves into mine: but, the moment I leave him, the clouds which his converſation has tended to diſſipate collect anew, and the former gloom returns upon me. Yeſterday, methought, I perceived in his plan the portrait of publick felicity; at preſent, it appears to me one continued chaos of difficulties. How could it be poſſible, for inſtance, burdened as the Empire is with immoderate expences, to relieve the diſtreſſes of the poor, by exempting them from contributing to the ſupport of the ſtate? How could armies, nearly annihilated by a war of twenty years, be recruited to their primitive complement, or the national impoſts be reduced to a trifling tribute?'—'He has not ſpoken,' ſaid Tiberius, 'without viewing the ſubject in every poſſible point of view; and I have no doubt but he will be able to ſolve your difficulties. Acquaint him with the reflections that have occurred to you.'

The converſation was accordingly opened by a ſtatement of the Emperor's reaſonings. When Beliſarius had heard them, 'I knew,' ſaid he, 'that I ſhould leave ſome doubts in your mind; but, I truſt, I ſhall be able to remove them all.

'The expences of the Court, according to my plan, are now reduced; we have baniſhed Luxury and Favouritiſm. Let us now take a view of the metropolis. And pray tell me the reaſon why ſuch an innumerable ſwarm of lazy inhabitants are ſuffered to ſubſiſt at the expence of the ſtate? The corn which is diſtributed among them would ſuffice to maintain twenty legions*. It was in order to people his new city, and make it vie with Rome, that Conſtantine charged himſelf with this ruinous expence: but on what title can a people, uſeleſs and inactive, found their right to be maintained at the publick charge? The Romans, a people altogether military, had an undoubted claim to be pouriſhed, even in time of profound peace, by the fruits of their conqueſts; yet, in the very heighth of their glory, they only required a portion of land to cultivate; and, when their requeſt was granted by the State, it is well known with what chearfulneſs they iſſued forth to the labours of the field. But of what uſe is the hungry multitude that now daily beſieges the gates of the palace†? Was it with them I expelled the Huns, who were committing devaſtations in Thrace? Let as many of them be retained as induſtry can ſupply with food and occupation; and ſend the reſt to form new colonies: they will increaſe population, and live on the fruits of their labour. Agriculture is the parent of ſoldiers. A good and ſerviceable militia will never be formed out of a lazy crew, who prefer indolence and poverty to a competence obtained by toil.

'Let the laws in general, but particularly thoſe which relate to taxation, be reduced to a plan of ſimplicity, and the militia of the palace will ſink through it's own inſignificance. The immenſe weight of expence from which the ſtate would be relieved by that circumſtance, you well know‡. The

* Forty thouſand buſhels per day; the buſhel, *modius*, one foot ſquare, and four inches deep. The Roman foot contained ten of our inches. Each ſoldier being allowed only five buſhels per month, or the ſixth part of a buſhel per day, forty thouſand buſhels would, conſequently, maintain two hundred and forty thouſand men.

† Et quem panis alit gradibus diſpenſus ab altis. *Prud. in Symm. Lib.* i. *v.* 583. Panes Palatini bilibres. The Roman pound was equal to ten of our ounces. *Vide Buling. de Tributis ac Vectigalibus. Pop. R.*

‡ Vide L'Orig. du Gouv. Fr. par M. L'Abbé Garnier.

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'moſt burdenſome expence then remaining would be the maintenance of the army; but even that would be confined to the legions. The colonies of veterans eſtabliſhed on the frontiers ſubſiſt by their own induſtry; and their immunities, and exemptions from all civil offices, ſerve inſtead of pay*. Theſe colonies, whoſe eſtabliſhment may be conſidered as the maſter-piece of Conſtantine's genius, are not as yet annihilated; and the will of the Prince is alone requiſite to reſtore them to their primitive vigour. The many brave ſoldiers, who are left to languiſh in miſery and idleneſs, deſire nothing better than to cultivate and defend the lands they have acquired by conqueſt. It is the ſame with thoſe troops which have been ſettled upon the borders of rivers†. Thoſe borders, rendered fertile by their labours, can now maintain the hands that cultivate them.

'Whole ſwarms of Barbarians‡ are continually preſenting themſelves for admiſſion into our provinces. They have ſometimes, indeed, been received with too little precaution §; but the only danger that can reſult from thence muſt proceed from their numbers. Let them be diſperſed in different quarters, and ſuch lands as are waſte and uncultivated be allotted to them. Of theſe, alas! we have but too many‖. By a government at once mild and ſpirited, theſe foreign emigrants may be rendered uſeful ſubjects, and well-diſciplined ſoldiers.

'The legions, therefore, are now the only remaining burden to the ſtate; and the bare tributes which we draw from Egypt, from Africa, and from Sicily, would ſuffice to maintain more than three times the number the government ever had in it's ſervice ¶. They ought not, therefore, to be the ſubject of œconomical reforms. It is not in regard to their *maintenance*** that the ſtate ſhould experience anxiety; but, to fix them on a good and regular eſtabliſhment, demands the utmoſt care and attention. There was a time when admiſſion into the Legions was an honour reſerved for the citizens of Rome††, and was warmly diſputed by young men who were eager candidates for it. That time is now no more, but it ſhould be renewed; and, what may not be done with men by the powerful influence of honour, and the pleaſing certainty of ſubſiſtence!'

'Men are no longer the ſame,' ſaid the Emperor. 'Nothing is changed,' replied Beliſarius, 'but Opinion, that 'ſovereign miſtreſs of the manners; and 'we only want the ſoul of one great 'man, his genius, and his example, 'to reſtore every thing to order. From 'a thouſand inſtances which convince 'me of the juſtice of this idea, take a 'ſingle fact, which, in my eſtimation, 'is worthy of the moſt glorious days of

* Jam nunc munificentiâ meâ (Conſtantini) omnibus veteranis id eſſe conceſſum perſpicuum ſit, ne quis illorum ullo munere civili, neque operibus publicis conveniatur. Vacantes terras accipiant, eaſque perpetuò habeant immunes. *Cod. Theod. Lib.* vii. *Tit.* 20.

† They were called *Ripenſes*. Alexander Severus firſt eſtabliſhed th m. *Vid. Lamprid. in Alexand.*

‡ Theſe emigrants were called *Læti*, and the lands that were allotted to them, *Lætic Farms*.

§ As the Goths, in the reign of the Emperor Valens.

‖ The Lands of the *Fiſcus*, or Treaſury, were of immenſe extent, as the puniſhment annexed to moſt crimes was the confiſcation of property. *Vide L'Abbé Garn. de L'Origine du Gouv. Fr.*

¶ Sicily paid a tribute to the Romans of ſeven millions two hundred thouſand buſhels of corn; Egypt, twenty-one millions ſix hundred thouſand; and Africa, forty-three millions two hundred thouſand. At the rate of ſix men to a buſhel, there was ſufficient to maintain one million two hundred thouſand men.

** The monthly pay of a ſoldier was four hundred *Aſſes*, value twenty-five ſilver *Denarii*, equal to one *Nummus Aureus*. The *Aſſis* was an ounce of copper, of leſs weight, by one ſixteenth, than our ounce. The ſilver *Denarius* weighed one grain, and the *Aureus* one hundred and forty grains.

†† This honour was alſo eagerly diſputed by ſuch of the youth of the Provinces as had the rights of the city.

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'the Republick; and which plainly 'demonſtrates that, in all ages, the vir-'tue of mankind has depended on thoſe 'who had the power of calling it into 'exertion.

'Rome was taken by Totila. One 'of our brave officers, whoſe name was 'Paulus, had eſcaped from the city with 'a ſmall body of forces, and entrench-'ed himſelf on an eminence, where he 'was ſurrounded by the enemy. There 'was no doubt that he would ſoon be 'conſtrained, by famine, to ſurrender; 'and, in fact, he was in want of every 'thing. When he found himſelf re-'duced to this extremity, he addreſſed 'himſelf to his ſoldiers—"My friends," 'ſaid he, "we muſt either die, or ſub-"mit to ſlavery. You, I know, will "not heſitate about the choice: but, it "is not enough to die; we muſt die like "ſoldiers. Cowards may ſuffer them-"ſelves to be conſumed by famine; "and daſtardly await, in pain and "trembling, the ſlow approach of tardy "death: but we, who have been edu-"cated in the ſchool of War, know "how to make uſe of our arms. Let "us ſeek an honourable death; let us "die, but not inglorious, and unre-"venged; let us die covered with the "blood of our enemies, that our death, "inſtead of raiſing the ſmile of delibe-"rate malice, may excite tears for the "very victory that cauſed it. Why "ſhould we ſubmit to purchaſe with "our honour a few ſhort years of ex-"iſtence, when we are conſcious that a "very few muſt bring us to the grave? "*Glory* may extend the limits of life, "but *Nature* never can."

'When he had finiſhed his harangue, 'his troops declared their reſolution to 'follow him. They advanced. The 'enemy judged, from the intrepidity 'of their looks, that they deſigned to 'attack them with all the formidable 'courage of deſpair; and therefore, 'without waiting their approach, made 'them an offer of life and liberty*,

'I think, my friends, that I know 'two hundred thouſand ſubjects of the 'Empire capable of equal magnanimi-'ty, had they a Paulus to command 'them. And ſuch leaders are ſtill to 'be found; our victories have pointed 'them out to you: do not, therefore, 'let us deſpair, nor think that all is 'loſt, while ſuch reſources remain. Are 'you ſtill to be told to what a degree 'the force of the ſtate may be increaſed 'by proſperity, plenty, and population? 'Only recal to mind the former condi-'tion—I will not ſay of Gaul, which 'we have ruined, and baſely abandon-'ed†—but of Spain, Greece, Italy, the 'republick of Carthage, and all the 'kingdoms of Aſia from the banks of 'the Nile to the Euxine ſhore. Recol-'lect that Romulus, who began his 'reign with a ſingle legion‡, left, at 'his death, ſeven and forty thouſand 'citizens under arms; and from thence 'conceive how much may be effected by 'a ſkilful, active, and vigilant mo-'narch. The Empire, they ſay, is 'undone: What! are Italy, Sicily, 'Spain, Lybia, and Egypt, all ex-'hauſted? Are Boetia, Macedonia, and 'the fair plains of Aſia, which conſti-'tuted the riches of Darius, and of 'Alexander, become barren and un-'productive? "But men are want-"ing," ſay you.—Oh, my friends, 'let happineſs be their portion, and the 'progreſs of population will be rapid; 'men will be found in plenty; and then 'I ſhould have courage to propoſe the 'vaſt plan which I have meditated, and 'which would alone ſuffice to render the 'Empire more powerful than ever.'—'What is your plan?' ſaid the Empe-ror. 'I will explain it to you,' replied Beliſarius.

'Our mode of carrying on the ope-'rations of war exhauſts our armies, by 'marches of extreme length, and by 'exceſſive labour. It gives time to our 'enemies to ſurprize us by ſudden in-'curſions, which the line of veterans

* Leonard. Aretin. de Bell. Ital. adverſus Gothos. Lib. 4.

† The Emperors, in order to deliver Rome and Italy from the Gothick yoke, ceded to the Goths the richeſt provinces of Gaul. *Facta eſt ſervitus noſtra pretium ſecuritatis alienæ.* Sidon. Apoll. Lib. vii. Ep. 7.

‡ The legion, at that time, conſiſted only of three thouſand infantry, and three hundred cavalry. *Vid. Dionyſ. Halic.* and *Plutarch's Life of Romulus.*

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'and of Agrarian ſoldiers poſted on our 'frontiers are wholly unable to reſiſt; 'and, conſequently, before the legions 'can arrive to ſupport them, ravage and 'devaſtation have made a rapid pro-'greſs, and diffuſed a general terror*. 'In order, therefore, to oppoſe a per-'manent fence to this impetuous tor-'rent, I would require the empire to be 'new-modelled on a military plan; ſo 'that every freeman ſhould be a ſoldier, 'but only for the purpoſe of internal 'defence. Thus each prefect would 'have a compleat army under his com-'mand, of which the cities would form 'the cohorts, and the provinces the le-'gions; with proper places appointed 'for their rendezvous, whither the ſol-'diers might repair at the ſound of the 'trumpet.

'From an army thus compoſed this 'eſſential advantage would reſult, that 'every individual would glow with the 'love of his native ſoil—that ſoil which 'his hands have cultivated, which is 'endeared to him by the labour he has 'employed to render it flouriſhing and 'fertile, and which, moreover, he has 'helped to people. Inſpired with theſe 'powerful motives of courage, you may 'eaſily imagine with what ardour they 'would defend their poſſeſſions†.

'In an extenſive empire, there is no-'thing more difficult than to eſtabliſh a 'fixed opinion that there is one com-'mon cauſe, to the ſupport of which 'every member of the community is 'bound to contribute. People ſepa-'rated by the ſea ſeldom conceive any 'conſiderable attachment to one another. 'The South is inſenſible to the dangers 'that threaten the North. The native 'of Dalmatia, or of Illyria, neither 'knows nor cares for what reaſon he is 'ſent to fight our battles in Aſia: to 'him it is a matter of no concern whe-'ther the Tigris flows under our laws, 'or under thoſe of Perſia. He is re-'tained in the camp by military diſci-'pline, and is encouraged by the hope 'of plunder; but reflection, fatigue, 'laſſitude, the firſt ſenſations of diſ-'content or terror, make him abandon 'a cauſe which is not his own. But, 'on the plan which I propoſe, the name 'of Country would no longer be con-'ſidered by the ſoldier as a vague and 'inſignificant term; it would be the 'object of his affection, ever preſent and 'dear, and attached to his heart by the 'tendereſt ties of nature. To inſpire 'the troops with a proper degree of 'ſpirit, as they advanced to the enemy, 'their leaders might thus addreſs them: "Citizens, this is the field that has af-"forded you nouriſhment! Yonder is "the roof under which you drew your "firſt breath! There the tomb of your "anceſtors, the cradle of your infants, "and the bed of your wives, whom you "are now going to defend!" Theſe 'are motives the moſt powerful, ſuch as 'muſt inevitably ſpeak to the heart: 'they have made more heroes than even 'the love of glory. You may eaſily 'form a judgment of their reſiſtleſs in-'fluence over minds accuſtomed from 'infancy to the rigours of military diſ-'cipline, and trained up to ideas of war.

'Nothing, I confeſs, affords me ſo 'much pleaſure, as the picture which 'Imagination fondly draws of the la-'borious, warlike youth, preſſing with 'ardour, in all our towns and villages, 'to the ſtandard of their country, pre-'ſerved by labour from the vices of 'indolence, inured by cuſtom to the 'moſt toilſome exertions, uſeful in the 'arts of peace, and eager to take the 'field on the firſt ſignal of war. With 'troops like theſe the crime of deſertion 'would be a crime againſt nature‡; 'and their courage and fidelity would 'be ſecured by the moſt ſacred bonds of 'ſociety. The State would not, on this 'account, be deprived of it's Imperial 'Legions, which, like ſo many moving 'forts, would be ready to advance from 'poſt to poſt at the call of Danger. 'When, by theſe means, a warlike ge-

* In the reign of Auguſtus, the frontier provinces did not exceed nine, and the legions were placed at fixed and regular poſts. But the number of provinces that required a conſtant guard afterwards increaſing, the legions became inadequate to the ſervice. Conſtantine withdrew them to an interior ſtation; and the lines of veterans that were eſtabliſhed to replace them, formed but a feeble ſubſtitute.

† Land poſſeſſions inſpire their cultivators with courage to defend them: their produce is the reward which muſt crown the conqueror. *Xenophon's Treatiſe on Huſbandry.*

‡ Communis utilitatis derelictio contra naturam eſt. *Cic. Off.* 3.

'nius, and a ſpirit of emulation, were 'diffuſed throughout the empire, every 'man would ſtrive, by meritorious ex-'ertions, to obtain a place in the ranks 'of theſe illuſtrious *corps*; and, inſtead 'of thoſe raſh recruits raiſed in haſte, 'and accepted through favour, colluſion, fraud, or negligence *, we ſhould 'then be ſerved by a choſen band of 'worthy citizens. How ſuperior would 'be the force of the Empire to what it 'could boaſt of at any other period, 'even in the times when it's glory was 'moſt refulgent†! What people, either 'from the South or the North, would 'then be bold enough to diſturb our 'tranquillity? Would they dare to aſ-'ſault *us*, who have ſo often repelled 'their attacks, with troops devoid of 'diſcipline, and almoſt deſtitute of 'bread!'

'And pray,' ſaid Juſtinian, 'what 'ſecurity could you have for the due 'ſubmiſſion of the people in a military 'ſtate thus conſtituted?'—'What ſecu-'rity!' replied Beliſarius: 'The beſt 'poſſible; their own intereſt; and, if 'that ſhould not prove ſufficient, they 'will be kept in ſubordination by the 'goodneſs of the laws, and the vigi-'lance and moderation of a wiſe go-'vernment. Have you forgotten that 'I founded my plan on the ſuppoſition 'that their happineſs was previouſly eſta-'bliſhed?'—'No,' ſaid Juſtinian, 'I 'have not forgotten it; but I believe the 'people to be fond of innovation, prone 'to change, reſtleſs, turbulent, and in-'clined to believe the profeſſions of any 'faction's leader who, finding his ac-'count in civil commotions, ſhall chuſe 'to promiſe them more liberty than they 'actually poſſeſs.'

'You view the people in a partial 'light,' replied Beliſarius; 'you con-'ſid[illegible] in their preſent ſtate, a ſtate 'of [illegible] like that in which they 'were [illegible]d at Rome†, when Rome 'was plunged in miſery. Be aſſured, 'that men always know their own wants, 'and underſtand their own rights; that 'they would not prove inſenſible to the 'kindneſs of a good prince, anxious to 'relieve their diſtreſſes, but would repay 'his care with a due return of grateful 'affection. If he be juſt, benevolent, 'and compaſſionate, confiding the offices 'of his adminiſtration to none but men 'worthy of ſeconding the good inten-'tions of a patriot prince, and protect-'ing his ſubjects with the fond vigi-'lance of a father; the people, on their 'part, will be docile and ſubmiſſive. 'What illuſion, let me aſk you, would 'prove ſufficiently powerful to enable a 'few ſeditious malecontents to convert 'a happy people into a ſet of perjured 'rebels? The prince, indeed, who 'leaves his ſubjects to groan beneath 'the iron hand of Oppreſſion, may live 'in juſt fear of a revolt; but the ſove-'reign who is known to be continually 'occupied in ſalutary proviſions for the 'happineſs of his people, may ſet Trea-'ſon and Conſpiracies at defiance. Can 'it be ſuppoſed that Rebellion will dare 'to erect it's ſtandard, amidſt the ap-'plauſes of a grateful people, employed 'in celebrating his virtues, and pro-'claiming his benefactions? Would 'the banners of Revolt be diſplayed 'amid ſcenes of rural tranquillity, 'where Happineſs and Liberty have 'eſtabliſhed their reſidence? or in the 'cities where Induſtry enjoys repoſe; 'and where the lives, the property, and 'privileges of the inhabitants, are un-'der the immediate protection of the 'laws? Would they be ſhewn in fa-'milies where Innocence, Honour, and 'Peace, the ſacred ties of Hymen and 'of Nature, find a ſacred aſylum? Is 'it in ſuch places, I ſay, that the tur-'bulent partizans of Rebellion can ex-'pect to meet with aſſociates? No: if 'the empire of Juſtice be not immove-'able, nothing ſublunary can laſt. But, 'even admitting that, in making the 'ſubject powerful, in order to render 'him happy and contented, there is a

* Hinc tot ubique ab hoſtibus illatæ clades, dum longa pax militem incurioſius legit; dum poſſeſſionibus indicti Tyrones per gratiam aut diſſimulationem probantur. *Veget. Lib. i. cap. 7.*

† Under Auguſtus, twenty-three legions; under Tiberius, twenty-five; Adrian, thirty; and, under Galba, three hundred and ſeventy-two thouſand men, half Romans, and half auxiliaries.

‡ Hi mores vulgi; odiſſe præſentia, præterita celebrare——Ingenio mobili, (Plebem) ſed tioſam, diſcordioſam, cupidam rerum novarum, quieti et otio adverſam. *Salluſt.*

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'great risk that none but rash and daring minds would incur, that species 'of rashness would I exert, though my 'ruin were the consequence: and I 'would boldly tell my people—"I put "arms into your hands, for the purpose "of serving me, if I prove just; and of "resisting me, if I prove otherwise." 'This may appear to you the height of 'temerity; but, in my idea, it is an act 'of consummate prudence, thus to place 'a due restraint both on my own passions and on those of my people; and 'especially to raise, by this means, an 'effectual barrier against the more dangerous passions of my ministers. When 'I transmitted my crown to my successor, I should at the same time transmit to him a jewel of greater value—'the necessity of being just; and such a 'legacy would form the brightest monument of glory that ever Monarch 'bequeathed. I am aware, my friends, 'that virtue needs not the restraint of 'fear; but what man is so far master of 'his passions, as to be sure that his virtue will never for an instant forsake 'him? A sovereign is above the laws*; 'your laws themselves assert it; and the 'maxim is a just one: but my first care, 'at my accession to the throne, should 'be to forget that maxim; nor would I 'pardon the infamous sycophant who 'should dare to recal it to my mind†.

'I must now, my friend, bid you 'farewel. To change the face of an 'empire is a laborious task. The hour 'of repose is near. There still remains, however, another calamity, 'which gives me great affliction, and 'of which I mean to talk with Tiberius at our next meeting.'

'His views are, no doubt, great and 'extensive,' said the Emperor, on his return: 'but, if it be possible to reduce his schemes to practice, the task 'can only be attempted by a youthful 'prince, who ascends the throne with a 'firm spirit, and a mind impressed with 'sentiments of justice and virtue, invigorated by courage. In addition to 'these qualities, he must have the advantage of a long reign, in order to 'effect so miraculous a revolution.'—'I am not competent to decide,' replied Tiberius; 'but I thought I perceived many things in his plan which 'required only a single determined effort of the will to accomplish: and, if 'the rest demand time, that time is, 'certainly not so far distant, but any 'prince, however advanced in years, 'may reasonably hope to attain it.'—'My dear Tiberius,' said the Emperor, 'you contemplate difficulties with the 'eyes of Youth: your activity vaults 'over them; but my infirmities shrink 'back, dismayed. To execute great 'projects, alas!' said he, with a deep sigh, 'we must begin at an early period 'of our existence. It is not the time to 'begin to live, when all we need is to 'learn to die. I will, nevertheless, pay 'another visit to this upright man: his 'conversation afflicts me; but I prefer 'affliction in his company to witnessing 'the insulting gaiety of those cold, 'senseless beings, who surround me in 'my palace.'

CHAP. XV.

THE next day, the Emperor and Tiberius arriving at their accustomed hour, found the hero sitting in his garden, enjoying the rays of the setting sun. 'It no longer lights me,' said Belisarius, with a look of serenity; 'but it still warms and comforts me. 'In that resplendent orb I adore the 'bounty and magnificence of him who 'made it.'—'How I delight to hear 'these sentiments fall from the lips of 'a warrior!' said Justinian: 'it is the 'triumph of Religion.'—'The triumph of Religion,' replied Belisarius, 'is to administer consolation in the hour 'of adversity, and to tinge with sweets 'the bitter cup of life. And who can 'experience the soothing delights of 'Religion in a greater degree than myself? Overwhelmed with years; deprived of sight; destitute of friends; 'consigned to solitude; and having no 'objects before me but infirmities, 'pains, and approaching death—in this 'situation, the man who could deprive 'me of the comforts I derive from religious meditation, would probably

* Princeps legibus solutus est. *Pandec. Lib.* i. *Tit.* 3.

† Digna vox est majestate regnantis, legibus alligatum se principem profiteri. *Cod. de Leg. et Const. Prin.*

'drive me to deſpair. The man of virtue is ever with his God*. A ſecret conſciouſneſs that he is acceptable to his Creator inſpires him with vigour, and chears his ſoul in the midſt of affliction. I well remember, in the firſt moments of diſtreſs, when every friend had forſaken me, and all around me were conſpiring my ruin, that I ſaid to myſelf—"Take courage, Beliſarius; thou art free from reproach, "and thy God beholds thee." This reflection cauſed my heart to expand with joy, that had before been contracted by ſorrow, and inſpired my ſoul with new life and vigour. I ſtill comfort myſelf with the ſame ſoliloquy: and, when my daughter gives vent to her grief, and bathes my face with her tears—"Can you be afraid," I aſk her, "that he who hath created "us will confign us to miſery and "oblivion? Your heart is endowed "with ſenſibility; it is virtuous and "pure. Your father is not more ſinful "than yourſelf; and can you ſuppoſe "that the Fountain of all goodneſs can "deſert that virtue which he loves? "O, my daughter! let that moment "arrive, when he who, with his breath, "called forth my ſoul into exiſtence, "ſhall command it into his own glorious preſence, and we ſhall then ſee "whether wicked men will come to "diſturb me in the enjoyment of ce"leſtial repoſe." My daughter liſtens with attention to this conſolatory language, which ſpeaks conviction to her mind: her tears, indeed, fall as ſhe liſtens, but they are tears of delight; and, by degrees, I have taught her to conſider life as a little voyage, which we perform in a barque, unprovided indeed with ſuch accommodations as we could wiſh for, but which conducts us to a port where all is peace and rapture.'

'Your ideas of religion,' ſaid the Emperor, 'are very pleaſing to the mind.'—'My religion,' replied Beliſarius, 'is the true religion. Would you have me contemplate the God I adore in the light of a ſullen and revengeful tyrant, who only delights in puniſhment? I know full well that, when he is repreſented to us by men of jealous, proud, and gloomy diſpoſitions, they paint him cholerick and violent, like themſelves: but, in vain do they attribute their own vices to a benevolent Creator; their miſrepreſentations will make no proſelytes; and, for my own part, I endeavour to figure to myſelf thoſe perfections in the heart, which it is my duty to imitate. If I am deceived, my error is, at leaſt, an innocent one. As God hath created me weak and feeble, he will extend his indulgence to my infirmities; he knows that I have neither the madneſs nor the wickedneſs to offend him. And, indeed, the motives of that impotent rage which is directed againſt the Creator, is to me incomprehenſible. To my God I am a thouſand times more faithfully attached, more fervently devoted, than I ever was to the Emperor: and I am very certain that the Emperor, who is but a man, would never have done me any injury, if, like my God, he could have read my heart.'

'Alas!' ſaid Juſtinian, 'that God, notwithſtanding what you have ſaid, is a terrible God.'—'Yes, to the wicked, he is terrible,' replied Beliſarius; 'but I am good; and, in the ſame manner as an impious ſoul is incompatible with the eſſence of the Divinity, I derive comfort from thinking that the ſoul of the juſt man is analogous to it.'—'And which of us is juſt?' ſaid the Emperor. 'He that moſt endeavours to be ſo,' replied Beliſarius; for integrity depends on the will.'

'I am not ſurprized,' ſaid Tiberius, that you delight in the contemplation of your God, ſince you behold him in ſo amiable a light.'—'Alas!' replied the old man, 'I am well aware that, in endeavouring to form a ſuitable idea of his greatneſs, I in vain exert my feeble faculties to unite in one object all that is good and glorious; and that a very imperfect image of the Deity is the reſult of my utmoſt efforts. But what can you expect from a man who ſeeks to know his Creator? If that incomprehenſible Being takes delight in any thing, it is in the love which he bears to his children; and whatever paints him to my mind in the moſt pleaſing attitudes, I ſeize with avidity, in order to form the moſt endearing conception of him.'

* Nulla ſine Deo mens bona eſt. *Senec.* Inter bonos viros ac Deum amicitia eſt, conciliante virtute. *Idem.*

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'It is not ſufficient,' ſaid the Emperor, 'to repreſent the Deity as a benevolent Being; you muſt likewiſe ſay that he is a juſt one.'—'It is preciſely the ſame thing,' replied Beliſarius. 'To delight in goodneſs; to hold evil in abhorrence; to reward the former, and to puniſh the latter; conſtitutes the true eſſence of goodneſs: that is a principle from which nothing can induce me to depart. Has it never happened to you as it has to me, to attend, in idea, the levees of Titus, of Trajan, and Antoninus? That is one of my moſt frequent and moſt pleaſing reveries: I fancy myſelf in the midſt of that court, entirely compoſed of the true friends of the crown; I ſee the ſovereign diſpenſe the ſmiles of complacency all around the honeſt circle; I ſee the rays of his glory beam upon them, and communicate their ſplendour, blended with dignity and ſweetneſs, diffuſing over their minds that ſublime joy which warms his own boſom as he imparts happineſs to others. If that be a brilliant ſcene, how infinitely more auguſt and reſplendent will be the court of him who is to receive my ſoul! It will be filled with the Tituſes, the Trajans, and the Antoninuſes, thoſe delights of the world. It is in their company, and in that of the virtuous of all countries, and of all ages, that the poor blind Beliſarius will appear before the throne of a good and juſt God.'—'And the wicked,' ſaid Tiberius, 'how do you diſpoſe of them?'—'They will not be there. I hope to behold, in thoſe manſions of bliſs, the auguſt and wretched old man who deprived me of my ſight; for he has done much good, and that from inclination; and, if ever he has committed evil, he has been ſurprized into it. He will be greatly pleaſed, I believe, to ſee my loſt organs reſtored to me.' As thus the hero ſpake, his whole countenance was irradiated with a gleam of joy; while the Emperor, reclining on the breaſt of Tiberius, melted into tears.

But his ſenſations of tenderneſs ſoon giving way to reflection, 'Do you hope,' ſaid he to Beliſarius, 'to meet with the Pagan heroes in thoſe celeſtial abodes? *Do you think they will obtain admiſſion?'—'My good neighbour,' replied Beliſarius, 'attend. You do not mean, I am ſure, to afflict me in my old age. I am a poor man, who derive my ſole conſolation from my ideas of futurity. If thoſe ideas are founded in error, do not ſeek to deſtroy the deluſion, but ſuffer me to enjoy it, ſince it affords me comfort; and it gives no offence to the Almighty, for it renders him more dear to my heart. I cannot be induced to believe that my ſoul is ſeparated from that of Ariſtides, of Marcus Aurelius, and of Cato, by an eternal abyſs; and, did I believe it, I feel that my affection for the Great Author of my exiſtence would ſuffer diminution.'

'Young man,' ſaid the Emperor to Tiberius, 'while you honour the generous enthuſiaſm of this hero, do not think of taking him for a guide in matters of Religion: Beliſarius never pretended to be deeply verſed in the myſteries of Faith.'—'Deeply verſed!' replied the old man; 'alas! who is there can boaſt of ſuch profound knowledge? What daring mortal can preſume to affirm that his weak penetration has pervaded the eternal decrees of Providence? But God has given us two guides, which ought to act in concert with each other; theſe are the light of Faith and of Natural Reaſon. Faith can never diſavow a truth that is impreſſed on our minds by the irreſiſtible force of intuition. Revelation is only meant as a ſupplement to Conſcience; it is the ſame voice that ſpeaks to us from the throne of Heaven and from the bottom of the heart. They cannot poſſibly be at variance; and, if the one informs me that the juſt and benevolent man is dear to the Deity, the other can never tell me that he is the object of his wrath.'—'And how can you be aſſured,' ſaid the Emperor, 'that this voice which ſpeaks to your heart is a ſecret revelation?'—'If it be not,' replied Beliſarius, 'God deceives me, and all is loſt; ſince it is that which teaches me that there is a God, which commands me to worſhip him, and which gives me a knowledge of his laws. And would the Almighty impart a

* It has been decided by the Fathers, that God would ſooner work a miracle, than conſign to everlaſting perdition the man who has faithfully followed the laws of Nature. But it is well known that Juſtinian was infected with a ſpirit of bigotry and perſecution.

'power of resistless conviction, to a gross 'error? Alas! whoever may oppose 'me on these points, let them leave 'me my conscience; it is my guide, 'my best support; without it, I can no 'longer distinguish right from wrong, 'or good from evil; truth and false-'hood become indiscriminate; I no 'longer know whether I have done my 'duty; I do not even know that I have 'any duties to perform: I then am 'blind indeed; and they who deprived 'me of the light of the sun, were by far 'less barbarous than he who should ex-'tinguish within me the internal light 'of Reason.'

'Pray,' said Justinian, 'what does 'this faint and glimmering ray enable 'you to distinguish?'—'It enables me 'to perceive,' replied Belisarius, 'that 'the religion which intimates to me a 'propitious and benevolent God, is the 'true religion; and that, whatever is re-'pugnant to the idea I have conceived 'of it, and to the inward sentiment I ex-'perience, is not of that religion. Shall 'I avow my principles? I am attached 'to that religion because it renders me 'better, and increases my affection 'for my fellow-creatures. If I felt that 'it made me sullen, severe, and pitiless, 'I would forsake it, and I would say to 'God—"In the dreadful alternative, "of incredulity or wickedness, I make "that choice which gives thee least of-"fence." But, fortunately, the reli-'gion I have embraced is congenial to 'my heart. Love God; love your fel-'low-creatures—can any thing be more 'simple and natural? To wish good to 'him who does evil to us—what a great 'and sublime idea! To consider afflic-'tions but as trials of virtue—what a 'glorious consolation to the human 'mind! Impressed with these senti-'ments, if incomprehensible mysteries 'are proposed to me, I acknowledge 'them above my reason, submit to 'them, and compassionate those whose 'judgment is less enlightened or less 'tractable than my own. But I hope 'for their salvation from the supreme 'goodness of the General Father of all 'mankind; and from the infinite mer-'cy of that Omniscient Being, who 'can forgive error.'

'By that doctrine,' replied Justinian, 'you will extend salvation to indefinite 'numbers.'—'And is it necessary,' said Belisarius, 'that numbers should 'be in a state of reprobation?'—'I feel 'with you,' said Justinian, 'that it is 'more pleasing to love God, than to 'fear him; but all nature bears testi-'mony to his vengeance, and to the ri-'gour of his decrees.'—'For my part,' said Belisarius, 'I am persuaded that 'he only punishes where he cannot 'pardon; that evil does not spring 'from him; and that he has done to 'the world all the good he can*. That 'is my religion. Let it be proposed to 'all the natives of the world, and it 'will be found worthy of universal 'esteem and veneration; the voice of 'Nature will speak aloud in it's favour. 'But, should Violence and Cruelty arm 'it with fire and sword; should the 'monarchs who profess this religion, 'with Bigotry, and the fiends of hell, 'over-run the world, torturing, in the 'name of a God of Peace, those whom 'they ought to pity and to love, they 'will either inculcate the belief that 'their religion is cruel like themselves, 'or that they themselves are a disgrace 'to the religion they profess.'

'You have now started,' said Justi-nian, 'a very serious and important 'question. It tends to no less than an 'enquiry into the right of the sove-'reign to insist upon an unity of wor-'ship, and of religious sentiments, 'throughout his dominions. If he 'really possesses this right, how can he 'exert it over obstinate dissenters, but 'by coercion and punishments?'

'As I am frank and open,' replied Belisarius, 'I will freely confess, that 'whatever tends, in the smallest de-'gree, to influence the manners, and to 'affect the good order of society, is 'within the jurisdiction of the sove-'reign; not as the judge of truth and 'error, but as judge of the good or 'bad consequences which result from

* The opinion of the Stoics, which was adopted by Leibnitz, and by all the *Optimists*, is here ascribed to Belisarius. Bonus est (Deus:) bono nullo cujusquam boni invidia est: fecit itaque quam optimum potuit. *Senec. Epist. Lib.* xxv. Quidquid nobis negatum est, dari non potuit. *Idem de Benef. Lib.* ii. *cap.* 28. Magna accepimus, majora non cupimus. *Ibid. cap.* 29. Deum sine consilio agentem ne cogitare quidem facile est: quæ autem fuisset causa propter quam male mihi consultum fuisset? *Marc. Anton. Lib.* vi.

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'them; for the first principle of every 'religious creed is, that God is the 'friend of order, and that he does not 'give the sanction of Divine Authority 'to any thing that can disturb it.'

'Well, then,' said the Emperor, 'can 'you doubt that there is a close and in-'timate connection between the pub-'lick manners and established faith?' —'I acknowledge,' replied Belisarius, 'that there are certain truths which 'have a sensible effect on the manners; 'but recollect that they are truths 'which, by the wisdom of God, bear 'intuitive and irresistible conviction to 'the human mind; conviction which 'no man in his senses can attempt to 'withstand. Whereas those mysterious 'truths which require the collateral aid 'of Revelation, have no connection 'with the morals of mankind; God 'has detached them from the great 'chain of our duties, in order that Vir-'tue might universally prevail without 'the assistance of Revelation. If, there-'fore, Providence has rendered the wel-'fare of society, the political happiness 'of mankind, the fate of empires, and 'the course of human contingencies, 'wholly independent on these sublime 'truths, why do not the rulers of the 'earth follow the example of their 'Creator? Let them examine, with-'out prejudice, whether, by the belief or 'disbelief of any particular speculative 'point, mankind would, in a moral sense, 'be better or worse; and, in a political 'view, more valuable citizens, or more 'faithful subjects. I maintain that 'their conduct should depend solely 'on this investigation; and, by con-'fining them to that simple rule, you 'see in what a number of metaphysical 'disputes I am willing to dispense with 'their interference.'

'I perceive,' said the Emperor, 'that 'you leave nothing to the superintend-'ence of the sovereign but what imme-'diately affects the interests of mankind; 'but can there be any duty more sacred, 'more important, than that which ren-'ders him the vicegerent of Heaven, 'and commands him to execute the 'will of the Eternal?'—'Ah! let them 'be ministers of his goodness,' ex-claimed Belisarius; 'and leave the mi-'nistry of his vengeance to the demons 'of hell!'—'To enlighten the mind of 'man, and promote the triumph of 'Truth,' said the Emperor, 'is coin-'cident with the plan of Infinite Good-'ness.'—'Truth will triumph,' re-plied Belisarius; 'but not by the me-'dium of Terrestrial Vengeance. Do 'you not perceive that, by arming 'Truth with the sword of Vengeance, 'you entrust Error with the same dan-'gerous weapon? that authority, to be 'exerted, need only to be possessed? 'and that the objects and ministers of 'persecution will ever change with the 'opinion of the strongest? Thus we 'know Anasthasius persecuted that mode 'of faith which Justinian now protects; 'while the children of those who were 'then massacred for their religious opi-'nions, now butcher, in their turn, the 'posterity of those very bigots who 'persecuted their fathers. Behold these 'two princes, who thought to render 'themselves acceptable to God by pi-'ously murdering their fellow-crea-'tures! and, pray, which of them can 'be sure that the blood he caused to be 'shed was that which God desired to 'see flow at his altars? In the bound-'less space of Error, Truth is but a point; 'and who can flatter himself that he 'has hit this point? Each man as-'sumes that happiness to himself, but 'what proofs can he furnish to substan-'tiate his claim? But, admitting he 'can produce the clearest evidence that 'he is right, can that evidence autho-'rize him to insist, and to insist sword 'in hand, that another shall implicitly 'subscribe to his opinion? Persuasion 'either comes from Heaven, or is the 'gift of man: if from Heaven, it is 'endued with an irresistible ascendancy; 'if it be of human origin, it can only 'claim the authority of Reason over 'Reason.

'Every man is answerable for his 'own soul. It is his business, there-'fore, and his only, to determine the 'choice on which the happiness or mi-'sery of his future existence depends. 'You would compel me to think as 'you do; and, if you are wrong, you 'see how dear it costs me. Though 'your own error might be innocent, 'will you be so in having led me stray? 'Alas! of what can a mortal be think-'ing, when he sets up his own religious 'creed as a law to others? Thousands 'who have acted with candour and rea-'son have been seduced and deceived. 'But, even supposing that his creed be 'infallible, am I compelled to sub-

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'scribe to it's infallibility, when it establishes, as a necessary consequence, that because *God* has designed to enlighten *his* mind, *he* is under the necessity of enlightening *mine?* But if his faith be founded on mere human evidence, what security has he for himself and for me! The only point on which all sects are agreed is, that they do not comprehend those mysteries on which they dare to pronounce with such peremptory decision; and shall it be a crime in me to doubt what they do not understand? Let Faith descend from Heaven, and it will be sure to make proselytes; but decrees and penal edicts will only serve to make rebels and hypocrites. Men of courage will suffer the pains of martyrdom, and cowards will conceal their doubts beneath the mask of dissimulation; while the fanaticks of every sect will be so many tigers let loose to prey upon mankind.

'Cast an eye upon Theodoric, that wise King of the Goths, whose reign, except towards it's conclusion, could boast of equal glory with those of our best princes. He was of the Arian persuasion; but, so far from requiring that his subjects should subscribe to his religious opinions, he punished the base and sacrilegious pliability of his favourites with death. "How can I think," he used to say, "that you will not betray me, who am but a man; since, from a spirit of mean servility, you betray Him who was adored by your forefathers?"

'The Emperor Constantius was of the same opinion: he never deemed it a crime in his subjects to adhere with firmness to their religious creed; but he thought it a sin in any of his courtiers to abjure their faith to please their sovereign, and betray their souls to obtain his favour. Oh! would to Heaven that Justinian had adopted the same line of conduct, and scornfully rejected the despotick idea of tyrannizing over the thoughts of his people! By pursuing a different plan, he has involved himself in disputes that never can end; disputes which have cost him more trouble than all his most useful operations. And what have been the fruits of them? Conspiracies, revolts, and massacres. They have disturbed his own repose, and interrupted the tranquillity that pervaded his dominions.'

'The tranquillity of the state,' replied the Emperor, 'depends upon unity of sentiment.'—'That is an equivocal maxim,' said Belisarius, often used, and yet the source of eternal mistakes. The sentiments of mankind are never more unanimous than when each individual is at liberty to think for himself. Do you know whence it is that Opinion is jealous, tyrannical, and intolerant? It proceeds from the unfortunate error of sovereigns in attaching to it an ideal importance, and of bestowing their favour on one particular sect, to the exclusion and prejudice of all others.

'No man can submit to be reviled, degraded, and stripped of those rights which every citizen and subject should enjoy; and, whenever there are two distinct classes of men in a state, one of which is excluded from all the advantages of civil liberty, whatever may be the motives of that exclusion, the objects of it's severity will always consider their country in the light of an unnatural stepmother. The most frivolous circumstance acquires a degree of importance the moment it is suffered to influence the state of society. Let the same degree of influence be annexed to a controversy on the number of grains of sand on the sea-shore as to that which is given to religious disputes, and you will find the same spirit of animosity arise from it. Fanaticism is generally compounded* of Envy, Inordinate Desire, Pride, Ambition, Hatred, and Vengeance, exercised in the name of Heaven. Such are the deities of which credulous and imperious sovereigns become the voluntary and implacable delegates.

'Were there nothing to be gained on earth by combating in the cause of Heaven; were Zeal for Truth no longer suffered to be the instrument of Vengeance on a rival or an enemy, to raise itself on their ruins, to enrich

* Privatæ causæ pietatis agentur obtentu, et cupiditatum quisque suarum religionem abet velut pedisequam. *Pope Leo to the Emperor Theodosius.*

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MVSEVM BRITANNICVM